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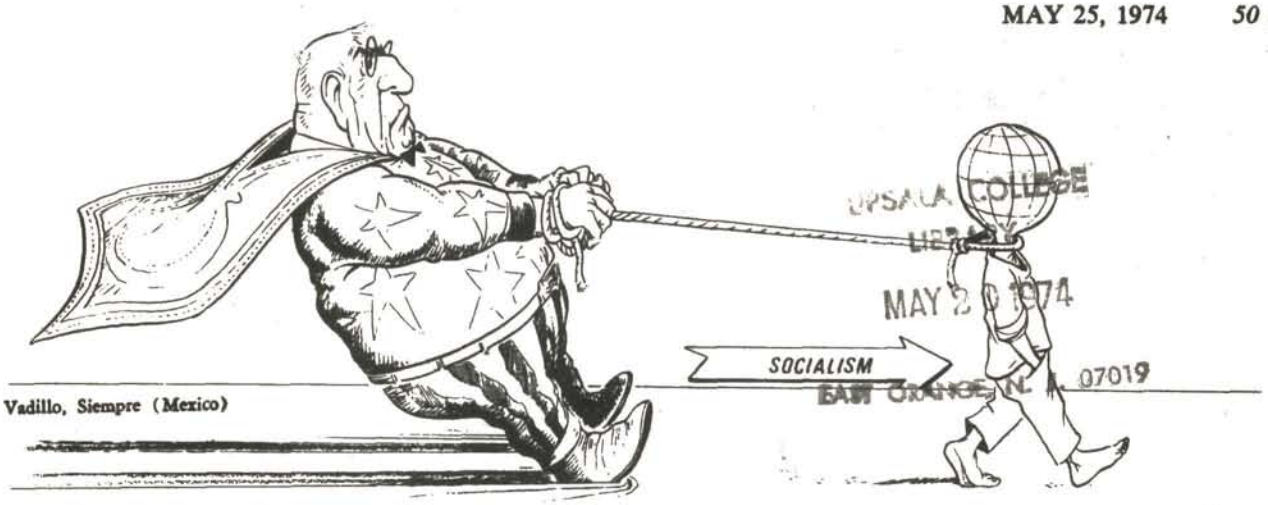

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SAY WHAT YOU MEAN—SOCIALISM

Michael Harrington

SOCIAL IMPERATIVES

Can Science Lend a Hand?

JAMES S. TREFIL

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The Mentally Committed

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LETTERS

terror and the press

San Francisco, Calif.

DEAR SIRS: While I have no argument with Desmond Smith's conclusion that ". . . the business of the press is reporting the news, not creating it" ["Scenario Reality: A New Brand of Terrorism," *The Nation*, Mar. 30], I do object strenuously to certain distortions, value judgments presented as facts, and omission of facts as they relate to the Hearst kidnapping. When Smith states that "indeed revulsion and horror have been replaced by a growing curiosity in the unfolding drama," he perceives such a transition as somehow wrong, neglecting entirely the dynamics involved when one's thinking tempers one's hatred, and that such a response is both constructive and civilized. (Don't the unreasoning hatreds in the Middle East teach Smith anything?) Smith also quotes De Vries' observation that the tone of the local press is "un-bloodthirsty," again implying that such a lack of vengeance is wrong and/or weak. (Does Smith forget that the tone of the national press did nothing to encourage justice in the Rosenberg case?) . . .

Desmond Smith may confront, describe and deplore but he fails to analyze two awful facts: (*a*) A small group of terrorists, apparently led by a man with "a history of crime and serious mental disorder," by manipulating a powerful press and corporation has exposed a general sickness: those people took that food. (*b*) The vulnerability of one "great" newspaper has revealed the vulnerability of all *commercial* media. There *is* censorship here. But who will tell us why? Is this a result of a "conspiratorial will of a few powerful people," a view which Smith finds "distorted"? Or is that lack of bloodthirstiness in the face of horror a common agreement made by a suddenly humane commercial press?

John D. Dolan

justice for recruits

Cambridge, Mass.

DEAR SIRS: Regarding "Recruiters' Hard Sell: The Small Print of Enlistment," by Kevin McAuliffe [*The Nation*, May 4], the author is to be congratulated for his treatment of the subject, especially in view of the technical nature of the materials we provided him. Mr. McAuliffe's story is, in general, soundly based, but certain errors are serious enough to point out.

The article says that the Universal (actually it's Uniform) Code of Military Justice binds the recruit to the enlistment contract, but not the service he enters. While this may reflect the general feeling one gets from reading the law on military enlistment contracts, it is not a provision of the UCMJ. Second, Mr. McAuliffe discusses several cases where money damages were sought. While the six reservists referred to in the article did sue for money damages, as far as we know, no suit for money damages in the enlistment contract area has been successful to date; in fact, any such case would run into serious sovereign immunity problems. Third, although there are a total of five enlistment "guarantee" areas, a recruiter is usually prohibited by military regulations from granting *all* five. Last, in the discussion of fraud, the article refers to a plaintiff named Williston. Of course, the Williston mentioned in the memo of the Committee on Military Justice was the author of a well-known treatise on contract law, not the plaintiff in an enlistment contract case.

It should also be mentioned that the committee does not support the implication that the problems of the military enlistment contract are a rationale for a return to the draft. There will be no real incentive to improve the enlistment contract as long as enlisted men are treated as pawns.

Richard Chase *Gary Holdeman*
Steve Bachmann *Andy Effron*
Committee on Military Justice

EDITORIALS

The Dominant Concern

Recent surveys confirm that inflation is the dominant concern of most Americans. In a poll of 20,000 constituents which drew an unprecedented 90 per cent response, Rep. Donald Riegle (D., Mich.) found that inflation was "the single most important problem." Rep. Jack Edwards (R., Ala.) received 14,000 responses to a legislative questionnaire and discovered that inflation was "the issue foremost on the minds" of 57 per cent. Arthur E. Sindlinger's well-known economic survey polls 2,200 households by phone each week. Of this sample, he reports that they are "screaming" about inflation; "they are talking a blue streak." For many, inflation has reached "the hardship phase." "One-third of the population," Sindlinger told the *Los Angeles Times*, "is just bordering on existence, and this includes a lot of white-collar people. The aged on Social Security are just barely managing." And not the poor alone. A recent issue (May 6) of *The Wall Street Journal* reported on the strenuous efforts of a young couple to make ends meet on an annual income of $12,000. The *Los Angeles Times* of April 28, in an interview with five "affluent families" in Orange County, found that inflation is high on the list of issues these families sensed as menacing.

What clearly worries most citizens is not merely the increase in prices—a 14.5 per cent annual rate of inflation for the first quarter is indeed cause for concern—but the apparent inability or unwillingness of government to initiate countermeasures. To many voters, the decision to permit wage-and-price controls to lapse seems like a confession of impotence or incompetence or both. As the deadline of April 30 approached, speaker after speaker in the House and Senate bewailed the impact of inflation but specific remedies were in short supply. "There is no denial," said Senator Proxmire, "that inflation is our number-1 problem. It is our number-1 economic problem, and it is our number-1 political problem." Yet controls were permitted to lapse in the midst of a flurry of proposals about the need to monitor price increases to determine what was happening! Despite mounting pressure to "do something," the Administration has decided to "hang tough" with the current "steady as you go" policy—if indeed it can be called a policy. This combination of a frightening rate of inflation with an obvious bankruptcy of leadership is generating dangerous currents of unrest.

Senator Mansfield defined for his colleagues: "This is not politics as usual. If we sit on our fannies and do nothing, let me tell you that a lot of Republicans and Democrats, come this November—if not before—are going to pay a political price." But despite this and similar warnings, the Washington consensus of the moment seems to be that there is nothing much to do but wait and hope. "In one sense," writes V. Lewis Bassie in *Illinois Business Review*, "Congress is simply recognizing the realities of the situation. Watergate has brought public confidence in the government to a new low; official promises and forecasts have come to lack credibility; the basis of cooperation necessary to the enforcement of any controls has been destroyed. But dropping the pretenses of control is a de-

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cision to let inflation run its course, a return to the old policy of boom and bust." As one reads the surveys and polls it is hard to shake the conviction that the combination of a continuing high rate of inflation with this abject, know-nothing attitude is brewing a political storm of major proportions.

The Disclosure Scene

Watergate has given new momentum to the drive to require financial disclosure on the part of members of Congress and certain federal officeholders. The Senate has added a disclosure amendment to the election reform act (S. 3044) that is virtually the same proposal as that Common Cause has advanced. It would require disclosure of assets, liabilities and income by the President, Vice President, members of Congress, the federal judiciary and executive and other officials earning $25,000 or more or holding DS-16 civil service ratings. It would apply to both nominees and candidates for federal elective office. The legislation would be administered by an independent commission and the GAO would audit returns of officials included—an expensive and perhaps unnecessary provision. This neo-utopian measure will have rough sledding in the House, but that is to be expected. The Senate has a penchant for adopting idealistic proposals on the assumption that the House will reject them.

Meanwhile, some sixty members of Congress, in response to an Associated Press survey, have made public disclosure of their financial net worth and twenty more are reported to be preparing, or "considering" preparation, of similar statements. The example of these "disclosers" has given added impetus to the drive for disclosure legislation. A study of the statements that have been released also raises an interesting side issue. From this sample it would appear that members of Congress enjoy middle- or upper-middle-income status; in fact some are quite well off and not a few are millionaires. The statements also suggest that, while serving in Congress may not be the most profitable career, members once elected seem to do all right. There are some "poor" disclosers but not many. The two gentlemen from Maine, Rep. Peter Kyros (D.) and Rep. William S. Cohen (R.), report net worth figures respectively of $25,000 and $29,000; by current Congressional standards, these are embarrassingly low. Mandatory disclosure would provide an automatic biennial index of wealth and income averages for both houses and that would be a minor windfall benefit.

Out on the hustings, the new game of disclosure politics is being played with zest. A favorite ploy is: "I have disclosed more than my opponent," in effect a form of political streaking. In some campaigns, issues have received less emphasis than net worth statements and income tax returns. In the recent Ohio primary, for example, Sen. Howard Metzenbaum had difficulty coping with the "charge" that he had paid no federal taxes in 1969, although he contended that he had suffered severe financial losses that year. This kind of demagoguery might be minimized if a legislative standard for disclosure were required of all candidates for elective federal office.

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Subscription Price: One year $15; two years, $27.50. Add $1 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $2 other foreign.

Change of Address: It is essential that subscribers ordering a change of address give four weeks' notice and provide their old as well as their new address. Please give Zip Code numbers for both addresses.

Manuscripts. All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Book Review Index and the Public Affairs Information Service.

THE NATION

Volume 218
No.21

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The current post-Watergate preoccupation with disclosure is salutary to the degree that financial net worth statements, including sources of income, have a legitimate if limited relevance to the choices voters must make. It also serves to remind candidates and officials that public office is still a public trust and that conflicts of interest must be avoided. In fact a consensus, by practice and example, has been slowly emerging over a period of years on the relevance of limited but uniform disclosure requirements. But disclosure is not an end in itself and care should be taken to safeguard a residual right of privacy, particularly with regard to individual income tax returns. Nor should too much reliance be placed on what disclosure can accomplish. A dollar-honest politician—the type billed as "clean as a hound's tooth"—can be a fine agent for special interests seeking public favors. Nor will mandatory disclosure statutes prevent a crook from acting like a crook. Even so, limited uniform disclosure is an idea whose time is near; just how near will not be known until Rep. Wayne Hays and his cohorts in the House have acted on S. 3044 and its amendments.

Nixon and the Hiss Case

In a conversation on February 28, 1973, President Nixon urged John Dean to "go back and read the first chapter of *Six Crises*"—about the Hiss case. Despite his friendship with J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI had failed to "give us one (adjective omitted) thing," that is, it had failed to assist Nixon and HUAC's investigation of the Chambers-Hiss issue. He had conducted that investigation, he told Dean, with the help of two investigators for the committee who were stupid but tenacious. "We got it done. Then we worked that thing. We then got the typewriter, we got the Pumpkin Papers. We got all of that ourselves. The FBI did not cooperate. The Justice Department did not cooperate" (p. 79, Government Printing Office edition of the Watergate transcripts).

The reference, of course, is to the famous Woodstock typewriter which was in fact produced by the Hiss defense for the first and second trials. In his chapter on the case, Nixon describes the desperation with which he fought for Hiss's indictment before the statute of limitations expired on December 15, 1948:

> On December 13, FBI agents found the typewriter. On that same day I appeared before the Grand Jury with the microfilm [of a second set of documents produced by Chambers]. . . . On December 15, the critical last day, an expert from the FBI typed exact copies of the incriminating documents on the old Woodstock machine and had them flown up to New York as exhibits for members of the Grand Jury to see. . . .

As soon as he read this, Fred J. Cook wrote an article for *The Nation* ("Nixon Kicks a Hole in the Hiss Case," April 7, 1962) in which he pointed out that the typewriter had been found by the Hiss defense—by Donald Hiss to be exact—and that an official of the FBI had said, under oath, that "the agency does not have in its possession *and never did have* in its possession any typewriter, known, believed, or considered to be the Woodstock machine" (italics added). In the wake of this article, Nixon's office released a statement, after some delay, saying that the reference to the FBI having found the typewriter was erroneous; Nixon had been misled by faulty news stories. By inference, this was a reference to a story by Tony Smith, a Scripps-Howard reporter, which had appeared on December 13, 1948. What Smith actually reported was that House investigators had found the typewriter *with the assistance of the FBI* (see "The Ghost of a Typewriter" by Fred J. Cook, *The Nation*, May 12, 1962). A HUAC report of December 31, 1951, states that the FBI had determined "the location of the typewriter." Later, in July 1956, Rep. John McDowell, who had served as a member of HUAC, explained that the FBI had in fact found the machine.

Now, years later, Nixon says that he found the typewriter with the assistance of two HUAC investigators, so once again he has kicked a gaping hole in the Hiss case. It is possible that the FBI may have *located* the typewriter and then told Nixon and the HUAC investigators about it. It is possible, also, that despite the denial by one of its officials, the FBI had the typewriter in its possession for some time before Donald Hiss "found" it. The curious circumstances under which the machine was found would indicate that someone—the FBI or HUAC investigators—had planted it on the Hiss defense. In any case, what Nixon had to say to Dean about the typewriter merely underscores the importance of making the HUAC files on Hiss and Chambers available to scholars, newsmen and investigators along with the FBI files; it also points once again to the importance of Nixon's testimony before the grand jury. By clear implication, Nixon is either a liar—it is hard to believe that he could be twice mistaken about who found the typewriter—or he is telling the truth, in which case he found the typewriter and then concealed from the Hiss defense the fact that he had found it. Fred Cook's painstaking account of how Donald Hiss was, in effect, led to the machine makes interesting reading in light of Nixon's statement to Dean.

Pentagon Shell Game

A close second to the devious maneuvers of the Nixon Administration in the Watergate and allied scandals is the manner in which the Pentagon juggles its accounts, apparently in a deliberate effort to defeat the fiscal intent of the Congress. Senator Fulbright puts it succinctly: "Congress turns off or cuts down the flow from one foreign aid spigot and they open up another one somewhere."

Back in January, the Department of Defense appealed for an increase in military assistance to South Vietnam from $1.126 billion to $1.6 billion. The request exceeded the limitations which the Senate and House had previously laid down in the 1974 Defense budget and was rejected. Providentially, the Department then discovered that through an earlier bookkeeping error, or some other happy mischance which was never explained, it had on hand about $266 million in unobligated funds from the previous fiscal year. This would fill an otherwise perilous gap in the defenses of South Vietnam. The maneuver did not make the grade. Senator Kennedy took the initia-

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tive in sponsoring an amendment which, in effect, reaffirmed the earlier ceiling. The vote was 43 to 38, enough to bring the Pentagon to heel.

In a subsequent development, Senator Fulbright charged that the Administration was "hiding" $490 million in the 1975 fiscal budget. It appears that this has been a Pentagon practice of several years' standing. In fiscal 1973 a modest $25 million was included for additional stockpiling for our Asian allies. In fiscal 1974 approximately $500 million was earmarked for the same purpose, and this year, as noted by Senator Fulbright, $490 million is being held in reserve. It might be needed if, for instance, South Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand and Israel were simultaneously attacked. Apparently Israel was rung in because of public anxiety over the Middle East situation, but the primary intent of these allocations is to reassure our Asian allies.

The Pentagon is staunchly supported by Saigon which, as budget time approaches, puts on an annual scare show, proclaiming that the North Vietnamese are about to overrun the South. Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim tries manfully to explain to the newsmen that the Pentagon is the very heart of candor. The best he can do is to cite vague statements in March by Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger and the then chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, about the advisability of *future* stockpiling of supplies for our allies. As a result of the Middle East October war, the United States was forced to send large quantities of arms to Israel from the Pentagon inventories. Nothing is said about *sub rosa* stockpiling in the amount of almost $1 billion in past budgets, and in the current 1975 budget.

As Senator Kennedy said during the debate on his amendment: "The question before us today has as much to do with fiscal control as it does with the issue of whether Saigon needs or should have more military aid. The question is whether more money for more guns will come by a vote of Congress or through the back door. . . ."

The Divorce Referendum

The surprisingly one-sided vote in favor of retaining the Italian divorce law is a victory for individual freedom and a "stinging defeat" for both the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and its political arm, the predominant right-wing faction of the Christian Democrats. It was a deserved but unnecessary political rebuke—the issue should never have been raised. Clerical parties, and not only in Italy, seem to recoil from moderation, which they persist in confusing with license.

In the Italian case there was less excuse for demagogic depiction of the existing divorce law as sanctioning sexual "permissiveness" because in three years of operation the law had proved, even to the satisfaction of many parish priests, that it was innocuous. In a country of 55 million people, 66,000 divorce decrees had been granted and petitions were tapering off. The law, as drafted, made divorce possible—just about. A couple must be separated for five years, and both must consent, before a decree can be granted. If one objects, the waiting period increases to seven years. Other grounds are incest, imprisonment for life of one partner and incurable mental illness. To equate such a statute with a design to disrupt family life and promote atheism is outrageous. No group in Italy challenges the indissolubility of marriage among Catholics; they are limiting themselves to a Catholic's right to vote in accordance with his convictions—a political, not a religious, question.

Pope Paul tried to keep aloof from the divorce wrangle; he went no further than to laud the hierarchy for its anti-divorce stand. Premier Mariano Rumor played his usual devious role, this time in a fashion even more maladroit than usual. The three partners in his coalition—the Socialists, Social Democrats and Republicans—were all for keeping the divorce law. The only allies he could find were the neo-Fascists, who declared that the issue was communism. Despite their desire to placate the Church, the Communists had no choice but to defend the divorce law. The *de facto* alliance of the Christian Democrats and the Fascists must have antagonized many elderly voters who remember Mussolini, and an incipient feminist movement helped swing women voters against Rumor's reactionary stand. Former Premier Amintore Fanfani was another loser. He stumped the country for repeal and further divided the Christian Democrats.

Fanfani, with Rumor's connivance, seems perfectly willing to turn Italy back to authoritarianism. Now that he has lost on the divorce issue, it remains to be seen what new alliances will emerge. The "tilt" of Italian politics should be to the left, but all that is certain in the wake of referendum is that Rumor and Fanfani and the Vatican took an ill-advised gamble and had their knuckles rapped.

A Long Way From Home

Many young Americans go blithely abroad, with little money and less experience, laboring under the delusion that foreign countries will receive them with loving kindness. They are misled by the tourist ads, not realizing that these are addressed to well-heeled, conventional Americans.

According to investigators, no less than 1,000 U.S. citizens, most of them young, are imprisoned abroad, mainly on charges of use, possession, sale or other illegal traffic in drugs. In ten foreign countries alone, according to reports from U.S. diplomatic and consular reports, 765 Americans are under detention on drug charges. So there is a real problem here—and one in which the United States, so accustomed to throwing its weight around, seems to be practically impotent.

A more or less typical case is that of two young American women and a male companion. The three were caught trying to bring hashish into Turkey, which would seem to be the equivalent of carrying coals to Newcastle. The young man avows the girls are innocent and is willing to shoulder the entire blame. It is said that fifteen other young Americans are being held in Turkey, but these three who have been in jail since December 1972, were sentenced for life (a recent general amnesty law will now set them free after a mere twelve years) and have apparently exhausted all their appeals.

Regardless of the guilt or innocence of these people,

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they are victims of strained relations between the United States and Turkey, which boasts one of the most nationalistic and Procrustean governments in the world. Some years ago the United States pressured Turkey into an informal agreement to cut off or reduce the growing of poppies in Turkey, a principal source of heroin in the eastern parts of the United States. To indemnify the poppy growers, the United States was to pay $35.7 million, of which a substantial part already has been paid. However, the Turks now wish to let the agreement lapse, for reasons of national pride, insufficient indemnity, the impoverishment of 100,000 poppy-growing farmers (somehow those U. S. millions failed to filter down to them) and the diversion of part of the trade to India. A joint resolution before the Congress proposes to cut off all ecnomic aid to Turkey if the government resumes full-scale poppy production. None of this promises to make things easier for the young Americans in jail.

NEW DIMENSION AT THE U.N.

The Third World Takes the Stage

ANNE TUCKERMAN

United Nations

The United Nations acquired a new dimension last month—that of a world bargaining forum for economic relations. The Special Session of the General Assembly on raw materials and development, convened on the initiative of President Boumedienne of Algeria, ended a three-week meeting of heated discussions with the adoption of a "Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order," and a "Program of Action."

It would be illusory to suppose that these documents, which contain a high proportion of vindictive political rhetoric, will now point the way to reversal of the patterns of international division of labor, trade and monetary arrangements that have evolved over the last century under the leadership of the industrialized capitalist nations. In fact, although the two resolutions were proclaimed to be adopted "by consensus," the many reservations which were expressed, mostly by Western countries (the United States openly disassociating itself from the results), make it more appropriate to apply the term "acquiescence," used by Ivor Richard, the representative of the British Labour Government, to describe the attitude of his and other industrialized countries toward a package that contained many (to them) unacceptable stipulations, as well as dogmas about "colonial and imperialist exploitation." Mr. Richard, commenting on the relative progress made, called the draft plan of action "a catalogue of every possible remedy that has ever been advocated for every conceivable economic ill."

On the other hand, for the Foreign Minister of Algeria, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, it was a victory of considerable scope. He welcomed "the new awareness which makes the international community readier to confront seriously the problems it has to resolve." While recognizing that the results were of necessity limited and that "no one had ever thought that the affluent countries would renounce, by a miracle, in the space of a few weeks, decades and even centuries of privilege," Mr. Bouteflika sees the direction taken by the Assembly as demonstrating that "the development of the Third World peoples and the victory which we must win over unemployment, poverty, disease, illiteracy and insecurity takes shape not as revenge of the poor countries over the rich countries, but as the victory of mankind as a whole over itself."

It was indeed a battle, launched by the most militant of Third World countries from the redoubt of the Arab oil boycott and price war. These countries had been angered by repeated failures of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to secure them better trade terms from the West. They saw in this latest development an opportunity to reverse the long-standing unfavorable relationship between the raw-material-producing countries and the industrialized countries which devour these materials at ever increasing speed and are alone in a position to transform them into products usable by the modern world.

The Foreign Minister of Algeria proclaimed that "the problem of development is the priority of priorities," and the president of the General Assembly, in his closing speech, stated that "an essential measure of development is the capacity of each country to process the commodity it produces."

The concept of a nation's permanent sovereignty over its natural resources—a principle accepted by the General Assembly in 1962, and a favorite theme of the U.N. debates on decolonization—emerged from the domain of politics and slogans to acquire the sharp edge of explicit recognition of the right to nationalize and expropriate. The only concession made by the Third World countries, as the price of a consensus on a Declaration of a New Economic Order, was to delete the claim that compensation for nationalization would be decided according to the laws of the producing country, and not by international law.

The Third World countries refused, however, to make a similar concession with respect to the provision in the declaration that multinational corporations shall be subject to the sole sovereignty of the countries in which they operate, and this was a factor in the denunciation of the documents by the United States, which called such regulations "discriminatory."

If the total result of the session could be claimed

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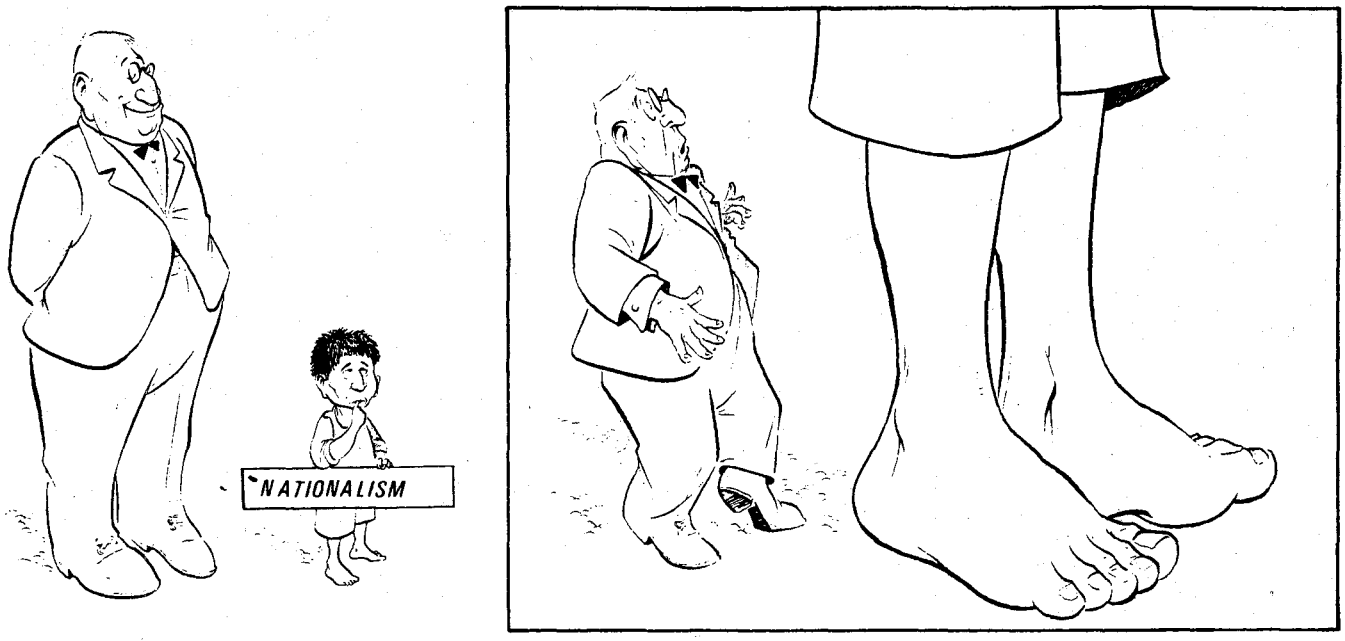

Vadillo, Siempre (Mexico)

as a victory by the Third World, the painful and tortuous labor which produced the two documents reflected the present crisis-laden situation both within and between the developing countries and the industrial powers. The Third World itself was severely divided. On the one hand were the rich developing countries, especially the oil-producing ones of the Middle East, made euphoric by their recent high earnings but uncertain about the effect on their development of the inflation which they have helped to accelerate. The oil cartel seemed impractical—even downright dangerous—as a model to producers of other minerals, like bauxite, who need investment capital and could be left in the lurch by substitute products; or growers of tropical crops which are already overabundant.

Down the scale of developing nations were what economist Barbara Ward called "The Fourth World"—that is, nations poor in both raw materials and commodities critically affected by the economic crisis. These nations, variously numbered at twelve to forty, have been hard hit by the soaring price of food, oil and fertilizers. The general scarcity of grain and other agricultural commodities will be discussed, and perhaps eased, by the U.N. World Food conference which will meet in Rome in November on the initiative of the United States; but India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the drought-devastated African nations of the Sahel and the Caribbean countries need urgent aid and would willingly have traded high-sounding declarations for more food.

The Assembly voted an emergency assistance program on their behalf, Iran and some of the other oil-producing countries participating. But a last-minute offer by the United States in the form of a $4-billion international fund was left in limbo when U.S. Ambassador John Scali, already restrained by a slow-moving Administration in Washington, found the Assembly uncooperative, if not downright hostile, to American interests.

The United States had from the start shown itself at best lukewarm to the Special Session, which ran, as the State Department saw it, at cross purposes to the Kissinger program of negotiations between the oil-producing and major oil-consuming countries. Ambassador Scali judged the results of the Assembly to be wordy and unrealistic, replacing urgently needed aid measures by polemics and slogans, and he reserved his country's option to act bilaterally or unilaterally.

The United States-European quarrel over the oil crisis came into the open as France, which had proposed a U.N. conference on energy as an alternative to the Kissinger plan, rallied behind the Algerian initiative and worked actively with other Common Market countries within the framework of the Assembly to promote an international dialogue and to advance the U.N. search for remedies to an unjust and anachronistic world economic order. The French view, shared by many, was that long-overdue adjustments of trade terms in the form, among others, of commodity agreements might avoid emergencies like the oil crisis, and would in the long run offer a better bargain all around without, at the same time, upsetting the essential economic foundations of the developed world.

Strangely enough, the two countries which have openly declared themselves as champions of the Third World, the Soviet Union and China, stayed on the sidelines in this confrontation between the capitalist world and the nations it has long exploited and which still depend on its financial investments. While China offered the advice that backward countries should mostly help themselves, and Moscow remained aloof from the formulation of principles that might affect the economic relationships within its system in Eastern Europe, the two vied in denouncing each other for greed and hypocrisy.

All in all, the U.N. Assembly expressed the frustrations of a troubled world, and increased an awareness of the urgent need for it to change from an assumption of infinite resources and ever increasing exploitation of them, for the benefit of the few, to a fairer and more rational distribution of the wealth of the planet. This theme will echo again and again in future U.N. deliberations. □

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SAY WHAT YOU MEAN—SOCIALISM

MICHAEL HARRINGTON

What attitude should liberals take toward radical, structural change? Should they stick to their eminently pragmatic and very successful tradition and focus upon serious increments of reform while refusing to generalize about historic epochs and social systems? Or should they make a new departure and speak in terms of alternate forms of society, of socialism as against capitalism?

I have been putting these questions to liberals for a good twenty years, suggesting that it is time for them to consider the transformation of the system rather than its improvement. I have not, I am afraid, persuaded nearly enough people. But now events are posing the same issue and if it is possible to ignore a Socialist intellectual argument it is rather difficult to overlook an energy crisis, or some other tumultuous happening, which shatters the peace and quiet of the *status quo*. So there is now some hope that America will finally grow up and join all the other advanced industrial democracies in which discussion of socialism is a commonplace.

I noticed this hopeful tendency during the height of the energy consciousness last winter. Academic friends who had regarded my own Socialist commitment as an idiosyncrasy began to say that perhaps the economic system itself had something to do with the catastrophe. Small wonder. For a few brief months the disastrous consequences of the normal state of affairs in the United States—that the government follows the priorities of the corporations, with expensive, anti-social results—were writ large on the very surface of everyday experience.

To be sure, people tried to forget the energy crisis the minute the waiting lines vanished from the gas pump. As soon as the OPEC embargo was over, the nation tried to pretend that the winter of its oil discontent had never happened. The difficulty is that the issue will not go away. Assuming the most reassuring of projections—that everyone can get plenty of gas at the corner station (which is not at all certain for even the immediate future) —$50 billion will flow from the affluent West to the OPEC powers this year, a fact which establishment organs like *The Economist* of London understand will change the whole world market. There are possibilities of both recession and further inflation in that incredible transfer of funds, and the $9 billion loss imposed upon the Third World as a result of higher energy prices this year is certain to exacerbate the danger of famine.

So let us assume, as realistically we must, that the United States will continue to be reminded of the perverseness of its economic system, not by clever Socialist insights but by brutal economic and social facts. In that context, is there a serious political possibility that American liberalism might be forced (as British liberalism was in the early part of the century) to consider basic alternatives to the fundamental structure of this society? And if so, how is that promising development to be encouraged?

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Before turning to that specific political issue, let me be a bit more precise about the late capitalist system in America by making a very summary analysis of the energy crisis, which has been forcing some people to think about the issue. Our plight is not primarily the result of the Yom Kippur war and the OPEC boycott that followed upon it. It stems, rather, from the federal socialization of private, corporate goals in the oil industry. In 1950, as part of the anti-Communist strategy in the Middle East, the National Security Council and the Treasury Department secretly decided to allow the American companies to deduct 100 per cent of the taxes they paid to oil-producing powers from their American taxes. This was better than twice the deduction that a normal corporation received; it meant that the industry and the oil-rich governments could raise taxes per barrel and send the bill to the American taxpayer; it laid the basis for a collusive relationship—at first utterly dominated by the companies; now much less so—between the OPEC nations and the oil giants.

Second, President Eisenhower climaxed a generation of oil *dirigisme* in 1959 by imposing oil import quotas. In the name of national defense, we effectively "drained America first" at a cost to consumers—in higher prices for protected American crude—of as much as $4 billion a year. Third, Eisenhower initiated a federal highway program, the most momentous social measure of his administration, which helped destroy the railroads, mass transit, the orderly and planned development of urban space and which reinforced the evils of poverty and racism in the isolated central city. The nation was thus made dependent on the increasingly expensive and decreasingly efficient private car and is still paying in the neighborhood of $5 billion of federal subsidies a year for this destructive inanity. Finally, a whole series of special deductions—for depletion, intangible drilling costs, etc.—were worth billions and turned the profit and loss statements of the big oil companies into exercises in creative writing.

All the outrages which are so plainly visible in the energy crisis are, I would argue, to be found throughout the rest of society. The internal revenue core is a labyrinth of special privileges, providing about $80 billion in tax savings, mainly for the rich, per year; all industry is dependent upon governmental management of the level of effective demand in the economy, a project which is almost always carried out by giving corporations carrots, but which rarely takes to them with a stick; and so on. This is the picture of a capitalist—or corporate collectivist—society, with a governmentally planned economy maximizing the interests of wealthy individuals and big companies.

The result is an incredible maldistribution of wealth. In 1974, so Nixon's Council of Economic Advisers told us this year, the lowest 20 per cent of American families received 5.4 per cent of the national income; the top 5 per cent got 15.9 per cent. That was a slight rise at the bottom (0.3 per cent) and a slight decrease at the top (1.6 per cent) but even that token redistribution

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falsifies the reality, because the figures omit the imputed rental value of owner-occupied homes and capital gains. A more accurate and shocking computation is the analysis of the distribution of wealth included in the government's recently published Social Indicators. Though the figures date from 1962, there is not the slightest reason to think that there has been any substantial improvement. We are told that the bottom fifth of America owns 0.2 per cent of the wealth, while the top fifth owns 76 per cent. That means that the top fifth possesses three times as much as the other four-fifths!

I have cited these figures and made my summary comments on the energy crisis to stress two propositions: the federal intervention into the economy is ordinarily anti-social because it follows corporate priorities; this intervention results in a continual and probably increasing maldistribution of wealth. On both counts, there are reasons to believe that something is radically wrong with the system itself. It is true, as Marx pointed out, that modes of production do not simply produce goods and services but also perpetuate themselves and their social relationships. That was bad enough when it took place in a relatively *laissez-faire* economy of the 19th century (the model of capitalism in *Das Kapital* is roughly the same one to be found in *The Wealth of Nations*); it is much more intolerable when such oligarchic results are carefully promoted by the power and technology of the democratic state.

Vadillo, Siempre (Mexico)

Moreover, if my version of the American reality is accurate, the consequences for the liberal approach to reform are serious. For the long-range tendency of the system is anti-liberal and that means that after every surge of social creativity—say the New Deal of the 1930s or the Great Society of the 1960s—the forces of the old order flow into and dominate the new institutions and turn them to their own purposes. Thus Richard Nixon, the one-time free marketeer, is now a Keynesian President who has used wage and price controls (to benefit the rich), run the highest peacetime deficits in our history, and in general employed liberal techniques for conservative ends. The serious pursuit of liberal aims requires that one go beyond liberalism.

All this, I submit, has been objectively true for some time. Now, however, it may be becoming subjectively obvious. That is why it is particularly important to probe the resistance, not simply of American society or of its corporate rulers, but of liberalism itself to a philosophy of structural change—i.e., toward what everyone else in the world rightly calls socialism. Putting aside for a moment the obvious anti-Socialists (businessmen, big and small, and all those under their ideological influence), I call attention to a paradox: if one examines the official positions of Americans for Democratic Action, or the New Democratic Coalition's statement of principles in 1972, they are seen to be Socialist in all respects save one—they do not mention socialism. They are for the redistribution of wealth, for government intervention on behalf of the poor, minorities and working people, and for the extension of public ownership. Why is it, if these liberal organizations urge essentially social democratic programs, that they have so steadfastly refused any social democratic identification? And, much more to the point, does the use of the term "Socialist" make any difference at all? Why bother with 19th-century nomenclature if the late 20th-century substance is satisfactory?

First of all, why do the best of liberals advocate Socialist programs which do not speak their own name? The obvious and compelling answer is politics. In America, with the exception of a few unusual constituencies, the Socialist label is a hindrance in mainstream electoral politics. Socialism is associated in the popular mind with totalitarianism, foreign ideology, atheism. These associations are not true, but unfortunately truth, particularly complicated truth, is no defense in a political struggle. Therefore, the extremely difficult question which must be answered before one can seriously propose to introduce the idea of socialism into American life is, why should any candidate take the risk? If it is possible to campaign for Socialist ideas, as long as they are not so described, why bother with the idea of socialism?

American business supplies the beginnings of an answer. It has taken the idea of socialism with dead seriousness

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over the past three-quarters of a century, investing considerable time and money to repulse an ideology which never achieved more than 6 per cent of the Presidential vote. Why did the corporations bother so much about the label? In part because businessmen, for all their pride in their pragmatism, are among the most dogmatic ideologues to be found in the nation. Even as sophisticated, informed and empirical a paper as *The Wall Street Journal* becomes in its editorials absolutely metaphysical in its devotion to the free-market panacea. The Committee for Economic Development is much more shrewd and worldly than the National Association of Manufacturers —that is the difference between the *haute* and *petite bourgeoisie*—but I suspect that even the magnates of the CED dream of those marvelous supply-and-demand curves intersecting in a Newtonian, frictionless space to assure the most efficient allocation of resources and happiness. In short, one reason for the anti-socialism of big business is sincerity.

But there is another, more cynical, reason. Anti-socialism is an extremely effective weapon for opposing liberal reform and that has been its realistic political function for generations. Norman Thomas used to tell of the Chicago ward boss in the 1930s who gathered his precinct workers together. "Do you remember," he said, "that we told you last year that Social Security is socialistic and we are against it?" They did. "Well we're for it now. It isn't socialistic any more." In the 1970s that ward boss metamorphosed into Richard Nixon, the Keynesian, the proponent of a guaranteed annual income, the advocate of a form—the cheapest, most private-sector-oriented form, to be sure, but a form, nevertheless—of national health insurance, and so on. Policies which he would have denounced as "socialistic" when he came to Congress in the mid-1940s were now part of dynamic free enterprise.

The point is that as long as the anti-Socialist prejudice is widespread it is an effective barrier to incremental reform. It is not an accident that the Tennessee Valley Authority has never been imitated, though, despite its environmental sins, it is an obvious success. All of that fantasy so expensively and assiduously promoted by the business-owned and -operated power companies—all that anti-socialism—had its effect. Indeed, Sen. Adlai Stevenson's proposed federal gas and oil corporation, based on the TVA model, was introduced with the specific disclaimer that its sponsor remained absolutely loyal to the American economic system (which really means, to the American economic myth).

American anti-socialism also helps create self-fulfilling prophecies which are extremely useful to the conservative cause. If the public is persuaded that the private sector, with its managed desires, its built-in obsolescence, its enormous, unpaid social costs, is the realm of freedom, then politicians will see to it that the public sector is as underfinanced and shoddy as possible. Which, of course, then proves that the public sector is bad, the private sector good. So, when there is a desperate need to expand the public sector—as there is now in the energy industry —we may be sure that the nation will not act, or that, at best, it will act in a timid fashion calculated to give the edge, and even the control, of the public undertaking to the private sector.

So liberals have a very real interest in making the rational discussion of socialism possible in the mainstream of the society; for until that is done liberal reform will be crippled and even blocked. Second, if it is true, as I believe, that this society is being forced willy-nilly to structural change, the persistence of anti-socialism in the major parties will guarantee that the nation will either not respond to the challenge or will do so on terms dictated by the corporate ideologies. Only those structural changes will be allowed which are certified as non- or anti-Socialist, as in the case of Nixon's use of "Left" techniques for Right purposes. Thus, even though a liberal organization can propose (though not enact) many of the individual components of a Socialist program, the basic animating spirit which must accompany each of those components—that there must be a fundamental change in the distribution of wealth, in the mode of economic decision making and in the very character of our dominant corporate institutions: in short, a wholesale democratization of economic power—will be lacking.

In sum, it is a bitter fact of late 20th-century life that Socialist ideas without the idea of socialism can be, have been, and will be used for reactionary purposes. As the energy crisis, the specter of famine in the poor parts of the globe and all the other basic, structural issues rush in upon us, it is of utmost importance that there be a response as powerful and integrated as the problems that provoke it. That could mean employing Left techniques for Right purposes; but it could, and should mean, socialism.

But how, then, can this last possibility be made political in the America of the mid-1970s?

First of all, one cannot begin by either converting or defeating incumbent liberal politicians. The same reason applies in both cases: in the absence of a mass Socialist consciousness in the electorate (or more precisely, given an anti-Soviet consciousness), practical politicians will not make themselves vulnerable by proclaiming themselves Socialist, and insurgents flying the Socialist banner will not defeat them. The most that a Socialist campaign will achieve under such circumstances is to give aid and comfort to the conservative opponents. Thus the crucial issue at this point is, how can we change the circumstances that limit our options so severely?

In saying this, I do not for a moment urge a non-electoral approach to the building of Socialist consciousness—to community organization, or mass education, as counterposed to political campaign involvement. The first way in which the intolerable circumstances can be changed is for Socialists to participate alongside liberals in their common struggle for immediate reform. That is easy enough, particularly since so many liberal demands are, as I have already noted, quite Socialist in content. In the course of that joint effort, what Socialists must stress is the necessity that an idea of socialism should animate and radicalize all those Socialist ideas.

This, clearly, is going to be done in the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, which, for better or for worse, is the home of the mass Left in America. At present, all that can be done is to create a very modest Socialist presence within the Democrats: open, candid, self-avowed,

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nothing like boring from within. And, rather obviously, the difficulty here will be to define socialism as a legitimate tendency within the mainstream of American politics. That does not mean proposing that the Democratic Party become Socialist, which it is not in the least ready to do, but insisting that Socialists have a role in helping to make it consistently liberal, an idea whose time has more than come.

In the process, the Socialist Left will have to break completely with some of its most cherished sectarianisms. More often that not, American socialism saw liberalism as its immediate enemy, as the program for crumbs which kept people from demanding the whole loaf. In breaking with this tradition, I think the argument for American socialism must be made in specifically American terms, i.e., with the understanding that any possibility for mass Socialist consciousness must emerge out of the present liberal consciousness. Socialism must, therefore, be put as a logical next step for liberalism, indeed as the only way to assure the actual achievement of liberal values. That is not only good rhetorical strategy; it also accurately describes the only way socialism can possibly become a serious political movement in America.

And there are reasons for hope. George Meany, Pat Gorman of the Meat Cutters, the Minnesota AFL-CIO and other influential labor figures have been talking openly of the possibility of nationalizing the energy industry. The liberal organizations have moved a long way programmatically in the direction of Socialist ideas. The women's movement is developing a consciousness of its need to confront basic economic issues, a fact symbolized by the impressive beginning of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and by NOW's boycott and other activities on the job front. And although students are not joining any organizations these days, there is a considerable residue of Left ideas from the 1960s.

The question is, will, there emerge a Socialist Left capable of seizing these opportunities? In helping to organize the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee around the strategy described in this article, I have tried to build a positive answer to my own question. For we cannot repeat the experience of the 1930s. American socialism emerged from the catastrophic collapse of the capitalist system weaker than ever before, and not the least because of its sectarianism. American communism made real gains, in considerable measure because the Popular Front tactic decreed in Moscow forced it to adopt the kind of approach to liberalism that I have described here. But then in 1945 the Communists were ordered to smash all the progress they had made, and they both obeyed and succeeded.

Is it now possible for a new American socialism to arise, a movement which can speak the genuine accents of this country and find a place within its mass Left? It is urgent and necessary. And yes, it is even possible. □

SOCIAL IMPERATIVES

CAN SCIENCE LEND A HAND?

JAMES S. TREFIL

The New York meeting was held in Chicago this year. Among physicists, a habit has grown up of calling some of their major meetings and conferences after the city in which they were first held. Sometimes, as with the "Washington meeting" of the American Physical Society, held in the capital every spring, the name and the city go together. At other times, as with the society's annual winter meeting (until recently held in New York, but now shared by San Francisco and Chicago), the old name survives in the new locations. In a profession devoted to mathematical deduction and precision, little quirks like this are a refreshing reminder of the basic humanity of even the most rational among us.

The tone of these meetings of the American Physical Society (the major organization for physicists in this country) have been gloomy of late. The last four years have not been kind to science in general, or to physics in particular. The "good old days" of the 1960s are gone, and scientists can no longer count on a continuous, federally financed expansion of their profession. The stories of Ph.D. physicists driving cabs and waiting on tables, while probably apocryphal, have enough truth in them to be upsetting. Nor does the growing strength of anti-scientific and anti-rational opinion among educated people inspire much optimism for the future.

Against this setting of uncertainty and foreboding, the energy crisis of last winter took on special significance. It may have been an unmitigated disaster to most Americans, but for scientists there was a distinct silver lining. It was, after all, our kind of problem and could be solved only by people with highly developed technical skills—*our* kind of skills. While there was no guarantee that we could provide meaningful solutions to the energy crisis, or that the solutions we did provide (like nuclear power) would be safe, nevertheless, as a colleague of mine put it, "It was nice to feel needed again."

Therefore, in a spirit of cautious optimism, the American Physical Society decided to take an unprecedented step during the winter meeting by scheduling a four-day symposium on the energy crisis. The purpose of the symposium was to "acquaint the physics community with the role of physics research in the solution of energy problems."

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By far the largest contingent at these annual meetings is composed of the academic physicists, both professors and instructors, from universities, in the dark tweeds that are almost their uniform. The men from the great government laboratories—Los Alamos, Argonne, Brookhaven—and from the industrial laboratories—Bell Labs, Sandia—are there as well. This basic stock of research scientists is seasoned with some colorful extras—self-consciously scruffy students (who are not looking for jobs) and immaculately dressed students (who are). There are always a few nuns in full habit, and a military man or two in uniform. There are few women, and fewer blacks. All in all, these meetings attract a representative cross section of the American scientific community.

The status hierarchy in a large group like this is established in a no-nonsense style that is typical of the way physicists attack problems. Each participant wears on his breast pocket a white card bearing his name and that of the institution he represents. This allows us all to make quick guesses as to the relative status of people we have never met before. For example, "John Smith, M.I.T." is immediately accorded higher status than "Bill Jones, East Podunk State College," though Dr. Smith may be on a one-year post-doctoral appointment at M.I.T. and Dr. Jones may be dean of the faculty at East Podunk and control millions of dollars in budgets, not to mention the job which Dr. Smith is seeking.

When I came into the Grand Ballroom for the first energy session, I checked the white cards to see if any large group was attending or staying away in significant numbers. From what I could see, the several hundred people there did not differ in any particular way from the general population of the meeting. This confirmed what I had suspected—that the recent hard times had affected every branch of physics, and that there was a widespread concern about making physics relevant to the energy crisis, and to social needs in general.

It did seem a little incongruous to be discussing the coming world shortage of energy in a room with large crystal chandeliers, a thick rug and enormous heavy drapes. The speeches, interesting and informative, dealt with all of the now familiar aspects of the growing shortage of conventional energy sources. But as the session proceeded, I began to wonder if it would do any good. What would happen when we all went home? Would our new-found "acquaintance" with energy problems be translated into meaningful action, or would we all go back to business as usual, with some lingering sense of virtue derived from our attendance here?

I fear it will be largely business as usual, because I doubt that the American scientific community, in its present state, has the requisite flexibility to respond effectively to the energy crisis. It is a discouraging conclusion, but one that I think is enforced by a number of facts about present-day science that are not well known to laymen. These facts are all in some way related to the problems of overspecialization that I call "the basic research syndrome."

If you have ever searched in vain for an ordinary M.D. among the array of specialists in the yellow pages, you have had first-hand experience with one of these problems. There are no longer any "general practitioners" of science. In the leisurely and eclectic traditions of 19th-century scholarship, it was not at all unusual for a man to spend a few years doing research in one area, and then follow his curiosity into another, totally different area. The German physicist Helmholtz, for example, studied magnetism and human hearing more or less at the same time, and it was not considered to be a remarkable feat.

But the great eruption of knowledge in the 20th century brought with it an increased compartmentalization and specialization among scientists. A microbiologist need not have the vaguest notion of what an astrophysicist does, and vice versa. In fact, as I shall show in a moment, any attempt on his part to find out about the work of another scientist in a different field may imperil his career.

Overspecialization is widespread today, and probably exists in many areas other than the sciences. The basic research syndrome, on the other hand, is something buried in the folklore of modern science, and is probably not familiar to most people. It is not an aspect of science that is given wide publicity, nor is it an easy thing to explain. It comes from a division within the sciences that has its roots in the ancient separation between the sacred and the profane, the philosophical and the practical, the intellectual and the mechanical. Basic research is, by definition, research undertaken to add to the store of human knowledge, whether or not the addition is of any immediate practical use. It is pursued, in principle, for pure intellectual pleasure. It is usually contrasted to applied research, which is research undertaken to solve a specific practical problem. For example, a scientist studying the swirling of gases in a distant galaxy would surely consider himself a basic researcher, while a scientist studying the swirling of gases in the cylinder of an internal combustion engine would not, even though both would use in their work the same scientific techniques.

As in any distinction of this type, there is an area of overlap. A man working on solid state devices may be doing so because he seeks new fundamental knowledge about solid matter, or he may be trying to improve the transistor. The difference between the two quests is not great, and it would be hard to categorize them absolutely. Nevertheless, the distinction exists widely in the sciences, and it has important consequences.

Stated briefly, the catch in the basic research syndrome is this: while scientists justify public expenditures on science in terms of economic payoff (i.e., in terms of applied research), the highest status in any science is accorded to those who do basic research. And in areas that are entirely devoted to basic research (such as cosmology or elementary particle physics), the theoretician (who just thinks about problems) takes precedence over the experimentalist (who sometimes picks up an instrument). Among theoreticians, in turn, the highest status goes to those who weave the most abstract theories, and the lowest to those who are concerned with explaining things observed in the real world.

This way of looking at things is not unique to 20th-century America. Archimedes wished to be remembered for his contribution to geometry (an endeavor which de-

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pends only on pure thought) rather than for his many practical discoveries and inventions, like buoyancy and levers. In normal times, such attitudes would make little difference to the country at large. Basic researchers would tend to congregate in the universities, where they would be under no pressure to produce marketable results. Scientists of more practical bent would work in industrial labs to find applications for the basic knowledge that had been gained by the previous generation of university researchers. The orderly progression of knowledge from basic to applied research, and from applied research to engineering and mass production, could continue on its leisurely way, as it has for several centuries. Each scientist would have his place in the progression; petty distinctions of the type I am describing would still exist, but would not be very important in the overall scheme.

Unfortunately, these are not normal times. As shown by the concern of physicists for their role in energy research, the scientific community realizes that it is being called on to produce quick answers to problems of immediate concern. But to answer that call, some fraction of the national scientific potential will have to be diverted from basic to applied research, and quickly. In light of the attitudes discussed above, I think it highly unlikely that such a diversion can be made.

The best argument I can give for this conclusion is to ask the question, "Which of the scientists who are not now working on energy-related problems can be expected to switch over?" As far as I can see, no large group of scientists is available for that type of work and, given the kinds of pressure exerted by the structure of the scientific establishment, individual scientists have very little motivation to shift from what they are doing.

When a prospective scientist enters graduate school, he normally faces a few years of intensive study in courses in his field, followed by a few years of research on a specialized topic. At the end of this apprenticeship, he receives a Ph.D., which is the union card of the research community. While the knowledge gained from taking courses is more or less common to all scientists within a given field, the specialized knowledge involved in research is not. This means that changing one's research field essentially involves going back to the point at which the choice of specialty was made, and embarking on the specialization process in a new direction. Even allowing for increased maturity and experience, few scientists could carry through such a procedure in less than a year of full-time work. Thus a scientist, who changes his research area in response to social needs, incurs the personal cost of a significant fraction of his professional life. This cost is a direct result of overspecialization, and an individual who makes the decision might expect some help from his profession in meeting the cost. In fact, the opposite is true. The present system imposes additional costs beyond simple loss of time on those who elect to change their areas of specialization in the interest of the larger society.

The explanation for this rather grim state of affairs is that university Science Departments are staffed almost exclusively by basic researchers. That, in turn, means that graduates of these departments will have invested a good deal of time in acquiring the specialized knowledge associated with a basic science. Any subsequent shift of research emphasis to an area of applied research will be seen, by the student *and* his professors, as a demotion of status; it will therefore be avoided as much as is humanly possible. Students who can obtain post-doctoral positions in basic research will do so, and will try as best they can to advance in the same field.

In the early stages of a scientific career, advancement usually means acquiring a "reputation," which in turn means carrying out and publishing research that is considered good by established scientists. Both quality and volume of work come into play here, and any time which a young scientist uses to acquire the knowledge he would need to contribute to something like the energy problem must be taken from his other research. Furthermore, contributions in applied fields will be given little weight by his colleagues in basic research.

In short, a young scientist has a difficult choice to make if he wants to help with social problems. He must either work on social problems part time, to the detriment of his career, or drop his basic research entirely and become an applied scientist. Since he has just invested several hard and poorly paid years to acquire a foothold in his basic research field, he would have to be truly dedicated to make the latter choice. At each subsequent decision point in his career, the scientist faces a similar choice, made harder by the fact that the older one is, the less inclined to strike out in new directions.

So the argument comes full circle. Once a man has been trained in the basic sciences, he is pushed, both by the accepted status hierarchy in the sciences and by the demands of his career, toward ever greater specialization. If he succeeds, he will train students in the same specialty, who will then enter the same closed loop.

Scientists are beginning to recognize the problem themselves, the energy symposium at Chicago being one example of this recognition. Increasingly, the journals we read have been pointing out the need to make training in the sciences more relevant to social needs. In addition, the basic research jobs are largely filled at the present time, and their number is unlikely to expand dramatically. In the future, more Ph.D.s will of necessity go into fields like energy research.

But it is not clear that we can afford to wait for the slow hand of economic relocation to swing the pendulum. In addition, there are many areas where research of social value could be done, but where the need is not as obvious or as compelling as it is in the case of energy generation. Most interdisciplinary efforts run into the type of problem we have been talking about. Research that doesn't fall neatly into one of the categories of university departments—that would include most research aimed at environmental or medical problems—will be discouraged because each individual scientist who might like to become involved has to face the damage that area-straddling might do to his career. Clearly, what we need are institutionalized procedures by which the innate trend toward specialization in science will be overcome.

One hint of what can be done may be gained by looking at men who have successfully switched from basic

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to applied research. My own observation (totally unsupported by statistical study) is that such men fall into two classes: those who make a clean break with basic research early in their careers, starting the re-specialization process soon after graduate school, and those who get involved in applied research problems as a "hobby," and then gradually become more involved in their new work, sometimes (but not always) to the point of dropping the basic research entirely.

There is little that official policy can do to encourage the type of people in the first class, other than to have positions available for their on-the-job training. On the other hand, while such recruits to the energy research program may eventually make important contributions, it will be years before they develop their research skills to the point where they could, for example, be placed in charge of a major research program.

A much more promising approach, and one more likely to lead to early results, is to encourage established scientists to interest themselves in energy research. A prime example of what this can produce is the recent development of laser-induced fusion by Prof. Keith Brukner of the University of California at La Jolla. This is, at the moment, one of the most promising methods by which fusion power might be harnessed, and it was conceived by a man who had already established his reputation in the field of nuclear theory, a highly abstract mathematical discipline.

There are a number of ways whereby contributions of this type could be encouraged. For example, fellowship programs could be instituted to allow university researchers to work on energy-related problems at large government laboratories. Some programs of this type, both formal and informal, already exist, but only a small number of scientists can take advantage of them. Research grants could be established for the express purpose of providing support for a change in research direction. A few moments' thought could suggest many similarly useful programs.

In fact, it is not at all difficult to think of ways to make things easier for scientists who want to re-specialize in response to social needs. The critical question is whether such programs can be set up in time to bring an appreciable fraction of American scientific skill to bear on the urgent problems we face right now, and whether, if there were such programs, enough scientists could overcome the basic research syndrome to make them worthwhile. □

STRIPPED OF ALL RIGHTS

THE MENTALLY COMMITTED

LEON GINSBERG

Despite the extension of civil rights to an increasingly broad cross section of Americans whose traits or behavior make them unpopular, one large group continues to be denied most basic rights—citizens committed to mental hospitals. Drug addicts, juvenile delinquents and sexual deviants are entitled to due process in the courts, free legal services (if their freedom is threatened because of criminal charges) and a specific sentence (related to the seriousness of the crime) if they are convicted. However, it is still possible for an American to be defined as mentally ill, incarcerated for an indefinite period of time (even a lifetime) without a statement of the charges and with no specific plan for ending his incarceration. Both adults and children are vulnerable to such violations of civil liberties. Children are, in fact, less protected from involuntary confinement than are adults.

Involuntary commitment to mental hospitals or insane asylums, their traditional name, was a phenomenon of 19th-century American politics. Originally a reformist movement, the construction of state hospitals came as an alternative to former practices, such as imprisoning those whose behavior was unseemly or potentially dangerous to others or embarrassing to their families, although noncriminal. It was thought that since lunatics, as they were then called, were not evil as criminals were, they should not be punished. Such helpless victims of disease or circumstances should instead be provided with safe and wholesome surroundings where they would neither be taunted by the sane nor present a danger to their communities. Like many other reforms, the solution became a new problem. As time passed, the typical mental hospital became no better than the average penitentiary. The definitions of mental illness broadened until almost anyone could be defined as insane within one framework or another. And the hospitals became convenient dumping groups for the old, the poor, the raucous and others for whom families and governments could find no other solution. No court would convict them—they usually had not done and would not do anything to violate the law. They were simply a nuisance.

Today, close to 500,000 Americans are in mental hospitals of one kind or another. Nearly 300,000 are in state and county facilities; the rest are in Veterans Administration hospitals, university and other general hospitals and private sanitariums. The records are not accurate; somehow, the United States has better information on the number of cars on the road, bathtubs per family and acreages per farmer than it does on the number of citizens it hospitalizes.

Yet there is some evidence that the total is dropping. In 1955 there were more than 500,000 people in state and county mental hospitals alone. By 1972, the figure was below 300,000. But these numbers are deceptive. More than twice as many people were hospitalized in

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1972 as in 1955. And while it is obvious that more people are released now than were in 1955, they are not necessarily the same people who are admitted in a given year. The propaganda is that persons who are sent to mental hospitals leave in an average of thirty to forty days. Although that is true of many persons newly admitted for the first time, it is not true of others who may be readmitted for several additional years of hospitalization, or of still others who may face upon entering the hospital a virtual life sentence.

The grounds for mental hospitalization vary from state to state. Although the public may assume that commitment usually results because the potential inmate is dangerous to himself or others (which is one ground), most commitments are of people found to be mentally ill, in need of care, or incompetent. These are matters of judgment, and who makes the judgment as well as the facts upon which it is based are crucial matters for the person facing commitment. In most states some sort of extrajudicial body attempts to determine the person's mental status. In some places it makes a recommendation to a judge, who has the final power to dispose of the case; in others, the board acts on its own. In a few states, the person facing commitment may demand a jury trial; in a few others, one or two physicians may commit a citizen to a hospital on an emergency basis.

The sanity commissions are usually composed of physicians, but psychiatrists rarely serve on such boards, particularly in rural areas where psychiatrists are seldom available. Service on a sanity commission or mental health board is apparently a fairly lucrative activity. Although the pay may be as low as $25 per physician per case, the cases are often grouped into a small block of time (perhaps one morning) and each hearing may last as little as five minutes. Frequently, no real diagnosis is made of the patient. In effect, the board tends to affirm the judgment of the relative, law-enforcement officer or physician who recommended commitment in the first place.

Persons charged with crimes and appearing before courts for trial are entitled to counsel. And if they cannot afford it, the state provides a lawyer's services. It may not be the best counsel and it may not keep the accused out of prison, but it is provided. A citizen who faces commitment for reasons of mental health is rarely represented by counsel. If he can pay for counsel, he can have it, and if he demands a free lawyer, he may get one. But most people facing commitment cannot afford lawyers and if they were aggressive enough to demand free legal services, they probably wouldn't be facing commitment in the first place.

The relative aggressiveness of mental patients is the basis for one of the ironies of the system. Although most Americans probably think the mentally committed are dangerous, most are not. One study of the correlation between length of stay in the hospital and violent behavior or suicidal tendencies revealed that it was negative. In fact, the study found that the more dangerous or violent a patient's behavior, the shorter his stay in the hospital.

Some other facts about the mentally committed population reveal that it is a special group, notwithstanding some mental health propaganda which says mental illness ultimately afflicts one of every ten Americans. That statistic may itself be erroneous, but if 10 per cent of the population were indeed committed, it would be a highly unusual 10 per cent. The patient (more of them women than men) is probably very young or very old, very poor or very drunk, or a participant in some highly unacceptable activity such as narcotics use or indiscreet sex. He or she is identified as mentally ill by someone with power to control the person and who finds his or her behavior offensive. That wielder of power may be a husband or wife, son or daughter, brother or sister, neighbor, or law-enforcement officer.

One study of 125 commitment cases showed that the persons fell short of population norms in a number of ways. Only fifty of the 125 were married, for example. They had a median education of only 9.1 years, much lower than the national average or the average for the state where the study was conducted. Most were members of lower status fundamentalist churches, if they were affiliated with churches at all. If they were employed, it was in the lowest paying jobs, or they were married to people employed in such jobs.

The involuntary commitment process denies liberty to people because they are different. When one's behavior infringes upon the rights of others, law-enforcement agencies and the courts have an obligation to study and perhaps find means for ending that infringement. But when one's behavior is only different, it ought to be tolerated. The typical case involves someone who would not be a candidate for commitment, if he or she had tolerant relatives, more money, or preferably both. Involuntary commitment traditionally has been the most common means of sending someone to a mental hospital. The person becomes a patient until cured, in the judgment of the hospital physicians, or until he or she finds some other way to depart such as filing a *habeas corpus* petition, which is rare, or simply walking away, which is common.

Voluntary admission has become more popular recently. However, it is not what the term implies. That is, one cannot always, under the voluntary admission regulations, enter a hospital at will and leave when so disposed. There is usually a hearing and the patient chooses voluntary rather than involuntary admission because of several advantages. For example, he is more likely to be able to leave when he wishes. The state's statutes may say that he will not lose his civil rights if he enters voluntarily and neither will he be presumed incompetent, as he might be were he committed. But it must be clear that many voluntarily admitted patients are people who faced commitment anyway, they merely chose what seemed the lesser evil. The ease of obtaining discharge under a voluntary admission is often overrated. Most statutes require notice of a day or two before the patient can leave. In that period, hospital officials can change the patient's status to that of a committed inmate. And as for the loss of competence, many such matters are handled on a case-by-case basis. If one's competence is not challenged, one can carry on business, marry, manage one's money, and otherwise function as an independent adult. But hospitalization for mental illness,

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whether voluntary or involuntary, can be a strong basis for challenging one's competence.

Commitment to a mental hospital can lead to the loss of several rights and privileges, particularly in those states where incompetence goes along with commitment. The process varies among states, with some specifically stating that hospitalization does not necessarily lead to the loss of competence. One may lose, depending upon the statutes of the particular state, the right to drive a car, the right to marry, to divorce or defend against a divorce, the right to maintain one's children and defend against their being adopted into another family, the right to practice a profession or trade, the right to manage one's property, the right to vote, and to hold office.

While hospitalized, the losses of rights are also great. It is difficult to describe such losses without comparing them to losses of rights faced by prisoners. In fact, the status of mental patients is more like the status of prisoners than it is like those who are free. In some ways, the rights of prisoners are greater. At least they know what their maximum sentences are and, within limits, they know what kinds of behavior may shorten or extend those sentences. The mental patient knows he is in until someone else decides he is ready to be out—a situation that has an unmatched potential for tyranny.

Depending upon the state and the practices of the hospital, a patient may lose the right to send or receive uncensored mail, the right to make or receive telephone calls, the right to read what he chooses, the right to choose what he eats, where he works, when and where he sleeps, and the right to determine how efficiently his body and brain will operate. The tranquilizing and energizing drugs, which have been hailed as the revolutionizing force in mental health practices, are considered by some to be among the most dangerous of all addictive substances, far worse than heroin in their long-term effects on the body, and often more damaging than alcohol to the personality. While it is true that the drugs made it possible for hospitals to eliminate the cuffs, strait jackets and cold baths of the past, some would charge that they have merely been replaced by chemical strait jackets. A walk down the corridors of most mental hospitals will bring you into contact with zombie-like creatures, walking with a sad, aging shuffle. These are the victims of overmedication, a practice that is common in mental hospitals because it makes the patients easier to control and therefore less bother to the staff.

Patients in hospitals also continue to be subjected to the kinds of rights violations that predate the psychiatric drugs. Restraints such as isolation rooms are still prevalent in mental hospitals, including those which serve children. Dangerous treatments such as electric shock and insulin shock are still used, often indiscriminately. And enforced work programs, sometimes euphemistically called industrial therapy, are offered by most institutions.

In addition, some new methods of treatment can in themselves prove to be cruel. They pervert behavior modification theories such as those of B.F. Skinner, the Harvard psychologist. Using either rewards or punishments to bring about desired changes in behavior, they punish patients with loss of canteen privileges, clean and comfortable bedding, and participation in recreation; or reward desired behaviors with tokens that can be spent in the canteen, special trips off the hospital grounds, or special meals. Although the terminology is more likely to be negative reinforcement (for punishment) and positive reinforcement (for rewards), the patients understand.

But it is probably the constant interaction with staff that causes the greatest humiliation. If you can imagine spending all of your days and nights defined as mentally sick, while those who have power over you are defined as mentally healthy, the situation can best be understood. It is not that mental hospital staffs are evil; it is that they have so much power over patients. I recall an in-service class at a mental hospital during which a nurse—a young, bright nurse—described her conflict with a middle-aged, male patient. He could leave, she told him, if he would improve his dress. He insisted on turning his pockets out and his pants cuffs up, she said, and she told him that he could plan to leave when he was able to improve his appearance. So far he had refused and was therefore still hospitalized. When I returned to the university and saw the carefully disheveled look of the campus elite—patched and faded jeans, hiking boots, torn T-shirts—I wondered if the patient was insane or generationally misplaced. And you must marvel at the power of one staff member to determine another person's freedom on the basis of such trivia.

If adults face violations of their rights in mental health matters, the situation of young people is even worse. Children do not have even the minimal protections afforded adults when their mental health is questioned. Typically, the procedure is for a child who is considered mentally ill to be committed "voluntarily" by his parents or guardians. In most states that is a perfectly legal procedure, even though the voluntarily committed youngster may be dragged screaming into the institution. Since children generally have no standing before the law, their parents are able to do the volunteering. Such a procedure effectively by-passes whatever legal machinery the state may provide. The sanity commission, the judge, the attorney—none of these come into play when a child is voluntarily sent to an institution as mentally ill.

There is little law governing the rights of children who are committed as mentally ill or, for that matter, governing any other nonproperty aspects of children's rights. The Mental Patient Civil Liberties Project of Philadelphia is currently testing the right of Haverford State Hospital to hold juvenile patients against their will, even though their parents want them hospitalized. One witness for the plaintiffs, who are all juvenile inmates in the hospital, contends that, because of the loose, voluntary procedures used, children who aren't mentally ill can often be committed to mental hospitals. Such children are usually disagreeable and an embarrassment to their parents, difficult to handle, or not eligible for institutionalization under juvenile court proceedings. They can become at times scapegoats for other conflicts within their families and can be committed as a solution to family problems, even though they may not be disturbed themselves.

In fact, the most reliable statistical data on children who are committed reveal that the overwhelming majority are adolescents diagnosed as having behavior disorders—

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teen-agers who are involved with sex, drugs or truancy. But often such behavior, while troublesome to the parents, is not sufficient to lead to a juvenile court conviction. Thus families can by-pass the juvenile courts, as well as the machinery available to adults facing commitment, and institutionalize their children.

The Philadelphia group is seeking to have the Haverford children released on the ground that they did not enjoy the normal constitutional safeguards associated with loss of liberty such as the right to counsel, right to notice and a hearing, and the minimum right to state his or her side of the situation. The group also seeks to extend the application of *In re Gault*, the case which extended procedural due process to juvenile court proceedings, to mental health commitments.

Certainly people have problems and a just society will find the means for helping them face and resolve them. I am convinced that the only services that work are those that people with problems want to have work. There must be six dozen mental health treatment approaches currently in use throughout the United States—psychoanalysis, Transactional Analysis, operant conditioning, Transcendental Meditation, Gestalt therapy, to name only a few. All of them seem to be effective with some people and ineffective with others. The variables appear to be the patient's expectations, belief in the efficacy of the treatment and desire to change. Therefore, it would seem that the only treatment that ought to be offered is voluntary treatment which the patient wants, selected from a wide range of choices that he or she is helped to understand. Certainly, hospitalization ought to be one of those choices. Some people need no more than the custody and security of the sort found in an institution. If that is the case, it ought to be provided to them—voluntarily. But involuntary treatment of any sort has no place in a democratic society, especially involuntary treatment that includes the sort of incarceration normally associated with conviction for the commission of a crime.

The rights of mental patients are no small matter to many former patients themselves. Groups of them are organizing self-help units throughout the United States. There are active associations of such ex-patients in New York, Texas, Michigan, Kansas, Missouri and several other states. They held a meeting, in cooperation with some like-minded mental health professionals, in Detroit last June, to pool their ideas and make a start on some of their problems. Spokesmen for these groups say that they face not only the social stigma associated with being former patients but also such practical consequences of that stigmatization as high unemployment and underemployment, estrangement from spouses and families, and the continued effects of drugs which were administered to them while they were hospitalized. Such groups are becoming the most militant spokesmen for the rights of the mental patient or, as they prefer, the psychiatrically oppressed.

Changing the situation requires a number of concrete steps, which could be accomplished by Congress, state legislatures, the state and federal courts, or a combination of those institutions:

¶ Involuntary commitment ought to be abolished. Denial of liberty, except for the conviction of a crime, has no place in a democracy.

Norris, Vancouver Sun (Canada)

"Just Between Ourselves, Your Obsession that the Rest of Society Is Mad Is Probably True. . . . But They Are in Charge."

¶ The procedural rights of those facing commitment, should involuntary commitment remain, should be stronger. Representation by counsel, guarantee of notice, and a careful, fair hearing ought to be made available to every potential patient.

¶ Hospitalized patients should have their cases reviewed periodically, at least monthly. And the patient, not only his records, should be examined to determine if he wishes to leave.

¶ Within hospitals, patients should be permitted to exercise all of the rights to communicate, make choices about their treatment, and be fully informed of their status that they would be permitted if they were not hospitalized. Denials of such rights should not be generally applied, but should be resorted to only in specific cases and for demonstrable reasons.

¶ Since the mental health system currently masks a number of other problems—lack of resources for the aged, poor facilities for those not able to care for themselves, ambivalence about the rights of youth—the nation must make a commitment to provide the facilities needed to serve such population groups. These might include day centers for the elderly and the disturbed, more tolerant school systems, outpatient clinics to counsel with parents and relatives of those who face emotional problems, treatment facilities that will provide adequate care for those who face emotional problems while they remain in their homes and on their jobs, and truly voluntary, high quality residential facilities for those who want them.

¶ Children facing loss of liberty should have at least those guarantees afforded adults who enter mental health commitment proceedings.

Greater public awareness of these issues may lead to the kinds of change that will guarantee the rights of that one large group which remains essentially without rights—the mentally committed. □

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THE JEWS OF CUBA

DONNA KATZIN

Little as we know about Cuba today, we know even less about its Jews. The break in diplomatic relations and the economic blockade have lowered a curtain of shadows, concealing from us post-revolutionary Cuba and its people. The resulting lack of information makes us vulnerable to the myths encouraged by our government and the exile community, which have attempted to isolate and undermine Socialist Cuba since the 1960s. In this context several major misconceptions have arisen about the Jews in that country:

¶ The only Jews left in Cuba are the old and the immobile who could not get out at the time of the revolution.

¶ Religious expression is banned in Cuba; thus the Jews are prevented from worshipping openly.

¶ Since Cuba receives aid from the USSR and has sided with the Arab nations, it is guilty (by association) of being anti-Semitic.

When I visited Cuba during the fall of 1973 and studied its Jewish community, I could confirm none of these speculations.

Who are the Jews of Cuba—where did they come from, who left and who remained after the revolution when Castro's government came to power? Individual Jewish families began coming to the island before the turn of this century, but there was little in the way of an organized Jewish community until 1900. During the Spanish-American War (1898), the first major group of Jewish immigrants came to Cuba from the United States to fight the Spanish. These "Americanos" were soon joined by Jewish Rough Riders from the troops of Theodore Roosevelt. They began to build a Cuban Jewish community, which celebrated its holidays and, in 1904, established the United Hebrew Congregation (Centro Macabeo de Cuba). During the early 1900s came the "Turcos"—Sephardic Jews from Turkey, the Balkan countries and Mexico (fleeing the revolution against Porfirio Diaz). Unlike their American co-religionists (with whom they had little contact), many of these Jews were very poor when they arrived and became peddlers and street vendors in the oldest section of Havana. In 1914 they established the first Sephardic congregation in Cuba, the Unión Hebrea Shevet Achim.

After World War I Cuba received Jews fleeing from Eastern Europe ("Polacos"). Many of them had hoped to join relatives in the United States, but the restrictive immigration laws of 1924 obliged them to remain in Cuba. By this time several economic and political trends emerging within the Cuban Jewish community began to manifest themselves in social and cultural organizations. During the 1920s the Centro Israelita de Cuba reflected the increasing numbers and interests of the small businessmen and of some second-generation Sephardim who had become professionals. At the same time, however, a growing number of poor and politically progressive Jews organized a separate Asociación Hebrea de Arte y Cultura. This theatrical and cultural association was closed down by the Cuban dictator Machado, when Jewish leftists fought against his regime. This move reduced the Jewish organizations primarily to middle-class cultural, commercial and professional associations, and to a number of professional and student groups of second-generation Jews, including the Circulo de Estudiantes Hebreos de Cuba. These basic economic groups were not altered by the fourth wave of Jews who came to Cuba as refugees from Nazism. While many immigrants later continued on to the United States or returned to their countries of origin, those who remained became prominent in business, academic and professional circles.

Thus the Cuban Jewish community at the time of the revolution contained poor Jews and progressive elements sympathetic to Castro, as well as merchants and businessmen who felt their interests threatened by a Socialist system. In an interview last November, Marcos Matterin, librarian of Havana's largest synagogue (the Patronato) and leading Jewish historian in Cuba today, was asked what happened to the Jewish community after the Cuban Revolution. He replied:

> Actually, nothing happened to the Jewish community. Except that simply with the social change that took place here, since the great majority of the Jews were businessmen and industrialists, they understood that they "had no future" under a Socialist regime and left the country. But it was not for racial or religious motives—since there was no discrimination here. It was only that they felt themselves affected economically and then left the country—the great majority of the community here. . . .

When the questioner pressed him—you say they "had no future"—Matterin clarified:

> No, they thought they had none. "Future" in the economic sense. Because they could not maintain their businesses here where the social order is one in which everything is state-owned. And they were private businessmen, understand?

"And did the Jews with businesses who remained suffer economically after the revolution?"

> Really the commercial and industrial question here has been a general thing. The Spaniards and North Americans felt themselves just as affected as did the Jews. But it was due to their economic origins. However, what they have "suffered" is a relative thing because . . . the state evaluated the worth of the industries and businesses and compensated the former owners of these industries and businesses. Those who wanted to work in state concerns were offered well-paid jobs to do the work they desired. Today there are still Jews who formerly owned businesses and industries who are working in these state concerns, just as there is a relatively large group of young Jewish professionals, born here, who are working in state organizations. . . .

These state employees are among the many Jews in

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Cuba who are neither old nor incapacitated. According to statistics gathered by the Havana Jewish community leaders, out of the 10,000 to 12,000 Jews who were on the island during the 1950s, approximately 1,800 have remained after the revolution. Of the 1,611 for whom they have specific data, 402 are more than 65. Three hundred are children under the age of 14, and 221 are adolescents and young adults between the ages of 14 and 27. There are 365 Jews between the ages of 28 and 45, and 334 in the 45-to-65 group. Little information is available about the estimated 200 additional Jews in the country.

Jewish youth is much in evidence on certain occasions, such as the Simchat Torah celebration (of the reading of the law given to Moses), which I attended, at the largest of Havana's six functioning synagogues. In addition to the thirty-five-member youth group choir, which performed traditional parts of the service, the younger children also sang Hebrew songs before the several hundred adults in the congregation. This group of children had been taught by their Hebrew teacher at the Albert Einstein School in Havana.

The Simchat Torah service is but one of the holidays freely celebrated by the Cuban Jewish community. All the synagogues (six are in Havana, one in Santiago de Cuba) celebrate Sabbath services on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. The major annual holidays are also observed by most of the congregations, although some "specialize" in particular celebrations. For example, the Shevet Achim (the country's oldest Sephardic synagogue) constructs for Sukkoth an elaborate traditional harvest hut within the temple building. Throughout the year, kosher meals are served in two restaurants in the capital, and kosher food can be obtained according to the standard food allotment. Ritual slaughter is still performed by two young men who were trained by the former Jewish butcher before he emigrated to Israel last year.

The Cuban Government not only permits but actually facilitates such traditional Jewish observance. On major holidays (Passover and the New Year), for example, it provides additional food that the Jewish community needs to prepare the ritual meals. The government also provides two school busses to transport children from all over Havana to the Hebrew class at the Albert Einstein School. While the formerly Jewish school is now public, like all schools in Cuba, and there are no longer enough Jewish youngsters to fill its classrooms, approximately forty children do attend the daily Hebrew classes from 3 to 4:30 P.M. In addition to the food allocations and the school busses, the government also sees to the maintenance of the two Jewish cemeteries and pays the salary of the same caretaker whom the community employed before the revolution.

A number of Jews in Cuba testified to the lack of anti-Semitism and to the favorable relations between the Jewish community and the Cuban Government. One young Jewish mother volunteered:

> Well, we do have problems . . . such as the lack of people, but no problems from the government. On the contrary. They help us as much as they can. . . . There is no anti-Semitism. Really, the way I feel about it, that would not be socialism, would it?

When asked about "changes" in the life of the Cuban Jewish community since the revolution, Matterin explained:

> The changes we can identify which have taken place here in general are really favorable. My friend Baldas can also testify to this, since he and I are in charge of the various relations with the state to resolve questions about Jewish organizations and the community in general. Thus we can say . . . that in spite of the tremendously reduced number of Jews who have remained here in Cuba—in the same proportion there still exist the same organizations, societies and synagogues which existed prior to the revolution. Except, of course, that in certain towns in the interior, in the provinces, there are no more Jews and so their groups have ceased to exist. But here in Havana, all the same organizations which existed before the revolution are alive today. They carry on their activities fully, without obstacles of any kind.

Matterin continued:

> Here the state has a special office, under the direction of Dr. [José Felipe] Carneado, which is in charge of resolving the religious problems of the different groups.

When asked about the government's attitude toward the Jewish community he described it as

> a good and correct attitude. And you have seen the preferential treatment they give us at the times of the major Jewish holidays. They grant us all the requests they are able to.

When interviewed in his office, Dr. Carneado remarked that the state had attempted to maintain good relations with all of the country's religious communities. Questioned about this policy in terms of Marxism-Leninism, he replied that the revolutionary government had always upheld religious freedom. Any other approach, he emphasized, would be inappropriate for the Cuban Revolution, which was building a new society for and with a people who include a high percentage of religious believers. He added that the state had a particular respect for the Jewish community because of its participation in struggles of "social justice." Dr. Carneado went on to describe the party's "exquisite respect for the Jewish practices and ethic, more as a question of principle than a tactic, since they felt a great interest in common with the Jewish community."

In the light of the Cuban Government's sympathetic attitude toward the Jewish community, it is important to underline the difference between the economic reorganization under socialism and "anti-Semitism." It is clear that the Jews who left were motivated largely by economic concerns, and were not fleeing religious persecution. Furthermore, those who remained after 1959 have experienced the same general economic conditions as other citizens, while continuing their religious and cultural

COMING NEXT WEEK

J. EDGAR'S LEGACY

How the Federal Bureau of Investigation was made into the Ministry of Internal Security.

FRANK J. DONNER

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activities. This religious freedom may be difficult for many U.S. citizens to understand. Since there is such an active campaign in this country against Soviet emigration practices, it is all too easy to assume that Cuba, which receives much aid from the USSR, must follow parallel policies. But the Cuban Jewish community itself testifies that the island's Socialist economic and political reorganization neither discourages religious observance nor tolerates anti-Semitism.

The question of political anti-Semitism was also raised here when Cuba broke diplomatic relations with Israel last September and sided with the Arab states. It is true that the Cuban Government strongly favors the Arab nations and has condemned Israel. As a result the Cuban Jews, like Jews all over the world, are uncertain about the future in the Middle East. But the Cuban Government's position has not affected policies toward its own Jewish community. Its spokesmen carefully distinguish between Judaism and Zionism. During the Yom Kippur war, for example, the official publication, *Granma*, carried an article which analyzed the history and beliefs of Zionism. The piece begins, "Zionism is the official ideology of the state of Israel, without any ties to the Jewish religion." It continues, quoting Lenin:

> Among the Jews there are laborers, workers, and they are the majority of the people. They are our brothers and suffer oppression of capital; they are our comrades in the struggle for socialism. . . .

The economic argument denounces Zionism as a tool of the upper-class and bourgeois interests, but says nothing negative about the Jewish religion or the Jewish people (*Granma*, October 22, 1973). Not one of the Jews I interviewed in Cuba felt that the official position on Israel would in any way jeopardize the island's Jewish community.

It would be egocentric, however, to examine the Cuban Jews only from the standpoint of our questions and misconceptions. One dynamic and unanticipated development is that the community has done more than simply maintain itself and its activities since 1959. It has also reorganized and adapted creatively as part of the surrounding Socialist society. In the process, it has drawn together to meet its members' collective needs as Jews, minimizing the national and religious differences which had once divided them. The increasing cohesion is particularly evident in the Coordinating Commission of the Jewish Congregations of Cuba. The founder of the commission and current president of the Patronato, Moises Baldas, explained the origins, composition and activities of this new structure:

> The Coordinating Commission was organized in 1963, since there were increasingly fewer Jews here in Cuba. And it was the wealthy who left here. Yes, that is the truth: that the rich left and the poor stayed. . . . And of the poor-poor one can say that all of them stayed. The very poor, no? Those who needed help—all of them stayed. And there was a need to organize the commission, so that there would be no differences. That, instead, there should be one organization, so that all of the congregations would participate in community matters in an organized way. So the commission was organized to include the [Havana] congregations, plus the Unión Zionista. . . . And we have had very good results.

During the past decade the commission has continued to plan collectively for the Jewish community and to distribute available resources to the neediest.

With the increasing cohesion of the various congregations, the old ethnic and religious delineations are becoming less evident. Describing the function of the Coordinating Commission, Baldas proudly pointed out that it had helped reduce such differences. Minimizing distinctions between "Polacos" and "Turcos," "liberales" and "conservadores," had "practically been the main idea for organizing the commission."

It is hard to imagine that such differences, which have been sustained all over the world for so many generations, could be erased in Cuba in fifteen years. In addition to the shrinking of the community there, a key factor has been the diminishing economic disparities among all Cuban citizens. Before the revolution the members of some congregations (second- and third-generation Jews, for example) were as a group conspicuously better off than others (often the new immigrants or Jews living in poorer neighborhoods). The synagogue buildings still reflect the differing economic statuses of their worshippers before the revolution; they range from an old house in Habana Vieja to a modern structure, complete with community facilities, in the newer and formerly wealthier Vedado section. This phenomenon, of course, is not unknown to church- and temple-goers in New York, Chicago, Paris, Mexico City and Tokyo. Today, however, with the elimination of private enterprise and the reduction in gaps between salaries, the old economic bases for the former distinctions are disappearing in Cuba. When questioned whether this development in the organization and attitudes of the Cuban Jewish community was in any way a result of living under socialism, the administrator of the Patronato answered: "To a great extent, yes, since the economic and historical bases of the differences between the congregations were being erased . . . everyone has the same. There are common needs and the Jewish community leaders meet to respond to these needs. . . ." In this way both the foundations and the creative development of the Jewish community reflect and respond to the surrounding Socialist society.

This is not to imply that Cuban Jews live in the best of all possible worlds. Their shrunken community has suffered a double blow with the initial loss of nearly 80 per cent of its former members and its subsequent isolation as a result of the U.S. blockade. The island's Jews thus find themselves cut off from their families, as well as from the the nearest and strongest mainstream of Jewish life. There is speculation now about a U.S. Government recognition of Cuba and lifting of the blockade. Many of the island's Jews would welcome such a chance for increased contact with their relatives and co-religionists in the United States (as well as in such other Latin American countries which toe the State Department/OAS line by not recognizing Cuba). That the United States—Jews and non-Jews alike—would also benefit from such increased interchange is steadily making its way into the public consciousness. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Gore Vidal and the Two-Headed Monster

ANN MORRISSETT DAVIDON

For nearly thirty years Gore Vidal has been publicly struggling with the two-headed monster of Lust. One of its heads is Power, the other is Sex. Vidal's Herculean struggle is not raw and sweaty, like Norman Mailer's. The wily Vidal, greased with urbane ambiguities, slips more smoothly from the monster's strangling grasp. Unfortunately (though perhaps fortunately for literature), the grease works both ways and the monster slips from the hero's grasp, too. Thus the struggle goes on and on, through the several million words of Vidal's thirteen novels and scores of plays, stories, essays and TV appearances.

Vidal's first novel, *Williwaw* (1946), is the least typical; the last, *Burr,* is the most mellow. By now the struggle seems more a game, a parody, a treacherously amusing pastime. *Williwaw,* written at 19, is dedicated "to Nina," the woman from whose womb or brow Vidal sprang; like its dedication, its subject is more conventional than that of subsequent books. It deals with the "masculine" world of men primarily struggling against nature and other men, peripherally warring and whoring. Most of Vidal's later books—more bizarre, quirky, cynical—are dedicated to men: "To the memory of J.T."; to John La Touche; to Tennessee Williams, to Lucien Price; to Christopher Isherwood. *Burr*—whose rascally title figure becomes more likable and paternal as his power lusts are thwarted—is dedicated to Vidal's three nephews (one named Burr), sons of his younger half-sister (also a Nina), to whom Vidal says he feels closer than to any other surviving member of his family. I mention names, dedications and relationships because they provide many clues to Vidal's themes and characters.

Vidal has expressed fond feelings for —though ideological disagreement with —his father, a conservative civil aviation pioneer, and his grandfather, Senator Gore of Oklahoma, both now dead. Named Eugene Luther after his father, Vidal early rejected these for his grandfather's surname, but the names Gene and Luther recur in his novels, and the characters of his father and grandfather are revived, not unkindly, in sundry forms. Vidal seldom mentions his mother, Senator Gore's daughter, about whom he once said, "We haven't spoken in years. . . . Perhaps because I put her in a novel once, and she thought that was dirty pool." Another woman who has figured in several Vidal novels in various guises is Anaïs Nin, who has also been displeased by his portrayals of her. While it is inevitable that the people who shape one's life also shape one's works, Vidal claims that his own creative transformations are not at all the thinly veiled notables of a Robbins or Susann novel. Mainly Vidal's works deal with men (despite the notorious *Myra Breckenridge*): their lust for power and glory, sexual lust for men as well as for women —often as a means of satisfying their power lust. The rising politician Clay in *Washington, D.C.* "could not have enough victories over women and, indirectly, over the men who did love them. Each time he took Dolly, he conquered Munson too." This sex/power play is spelled out even more clearly in *Myra Breckenridge,* which satirically probes power via the back door of sex.

While sex is often the means, this lust for power is the overriding theme of Vidal's several major novels. Julian is defeated by his Alexandrian lust to go too far; in *Washington, D.C.* the opportunistic Clay seems headed for the Presidency but his earlier mentor, Senator Burden (reminiscent of Senator Gore) is figuratively killed by the power game he reluctantly plays. Aaron Burr, though he pursues military and then political power in his robustly cynical fashion, in the end takes nothing too seriously and outlives everybody.

How can it be said that Vidal is struggling *against* these lusts when throughout his works he seems to be their devotee? "Sex is," he says. Sex in all its forms—basically bisexuality, he believes—is a fact of life, not to be repressed or legislated. This note runs explicitly or implicitly through many of his essays, and most of his novels. Legislating birth control is a problem he hasn't reconciled with personal freedom, however, though he believes it urgent, along with curbs on other human excesses and pollutions. "This is the split in my head, and should be in everyone's," he says (quoted in *The Atlantic* of March 1972, and echoing his *Esquire* essay "Manifesto and Dialogue"): "To reverse what's being done to the environment will require world controls." Human beings "breeding like bacteria under optimum conditions" is a frequent image in his writings. As Myra Breckenridge suggests—to the horror of William Buckley and other breeding buffs—homosexuality is one solution.

The ambivalences of a writer are the most exquisite, for words are both substitutes for, and prods to (or even forms of) action. In the paradoxical power of words—those vicars of the gods, those angel javelins which have only as much power as there is belief—lies both redemption and corruption. While Vidal as an avowed atheist can hardly qualify as vicar of the Judeo-Christian Lord, he takes vicarious pleasure as restorer of the pagan gods, prophesying doom and castigating Christians (often for not being better ones!). Ostensibly down on Christianity and Puritanism—despite his Episcopalian upbringing—he is up on the Greek gods and Roman conquerors whose myths and fables fed his youth. But even at his most Dionysian, there is an evangelical fervor to his scathing pronouncements on the Galileans (as the Christians are called) of *Julian,* and on the "romantic-puritans" of our time who turn book reviewing into "pulpiteering."

In *Judgment of Paris* (1952) Philip "thought of what Regina [who is a guise of the once regnant Anaïs] had said about the old gods, and he wondered if she were right: were they constant after all? Would they reappear now that the last Messiah's work had been undone?" For this dethroned Messiah of the Judeo-Christians, Vidal has no apparent regret, yet he announces another Messiah in *The Judgment of Paris* through the prophet Abu Bekr; and realizes one in the book *Messiah* (1954) whose message is that death is nothing, *no thing,* and therefore not to be feared. Vidal's vicar in this novel is Gene, scriptwriter for the new Messiah, who is half-convinced but balks at the doctrine's implications about suicide, not to mention homicide. (The preoccupation with death-as-nothing is also a recurrent note in many of Vidal's novels and essays.) In *Julian* (1964), the driving impetus of the young Emperor of that name, who died at about the age that Vidal was when he wrote the book, is initially to reverse the Christianization of the Roman Empire and to restore the Hellenistic gods. Finally, his lust for real estate does him

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in; still, he emerges as a hero for his ambitions, not as a villain for his overreaching lusts.

That peculiar combination of spiritual compassion and carnal lust known as love is usually given short shrift by Vidal. At times he suggests it is only for the very few; at other times that it is nonexistent or at best ephemeral. It appears in more sustained form—but then mainly in the imagination, as a longing—in *The City and the Pillar* (1948), in Jim's adolescent love for Bob, which culminates years later (in the earlier and unrevised version) in Jim's murder of Bob. It occurs also in *Two Sisters* (1970), in the narrator's nostalgic love for the dead Eric. There is a certain ambiguity in *Two Sisters* (a semi-novel dedicated to the author's half-sister Nina): while Eric is the object of the narrator's unfulfilled love, another object is Eric's twin sister Erika, by whom the narrator thinks he has had a child until he learns that it is really Eric's. (There is evident pleasure in the prospect of this biological connection—as there is in Charlie Schuyler's discovery of his siring by Aaron Burr, and in Vidal's own family connection with Burr.)

Incest and mirror-images are rife in the rare affairs which might qualify as love. In *The City and the Pillar,* homosexuality is explained as a natural narcissism (as well as reaction to dominating American women): Jim's love for Bob is seen as love for a brother, or for self. Yet in several novels Vidal expresses a fear or disgust about touching, emotionally as well as physically. But there is also longing: "The Italian pleasure in the natural communicated itself to these two Puritan youths who, nevertheless, felt all pleasure was evil and that only pain was good" (*The Judgment of Paris*). As in many of his novels, the protagonist is tall and Aryan; his longing—and sometimes repulsion—is for the "natural," the Mediterranean, the dark underside. (Vidal himself, an exceedingly handsome man with soft jowls of boyish decadence, is tall and dark-haired, part Italian and part WASP.) The opposites which attract also repel, and have no issue.

At 20, Vidal told Anaïs Nin, "I do not want to be involved, ever. . . . I like casual relationships. When you are involved you get hurt." In most of his novels the detached observer is omnipresent: in *Messiah* it is Gene, whose disillusionment, though the illusion was always tenuous, leads to exile. In *Washington, D.C.*, it is Peter, who like Vidal becomes both a critic and editor—and thinks he might one day write about Aaron Burr, an ancestor. In *Julian* the two mentor-philosophers who comment on Julian's memoirs serve as Vidal's alter egos, though part of Vidal, not quite all, clearly identifies itself with the power-committed Julian. In *Burr* the identification again is split between Burr the adventurer and Charlie the devoted observer of Burr, between father and unknowing son. The man of action is inevitably balanced by the unengaged observer—except in earlier works like *The City and the Pillar,* in which the protagonist is sufficiently obsessed to destroy the object of his love. "When you get involved you get hurt."

More or less fulfilled man-woman "relationships" (one of the categories like "romantic-puritans," "bookchat writers," and "three-named lady authors," that evoke Vidal's vitriol) begins to occur, rather sketchily, only in later novels like *Washington, D.C.* (published when Vidal was 41) and *Burr* (published just before his 48th birthday). In the last, Burr's love for his wife and daughter, despite his amorous meanderings, and Charlie Schuyler's love for his whore Helen, are portrayed credibly and rather touchingly. Lust is even given a bad name by Mrs. Townsend, madame of the house where Charlie met the woman he came to love: "Lust is stupid, Mr. Schuyler," says Mrs. T. after Helen has been murdered, "and so is harmful to its object."

One can sympathize with Vidal's impatient attitude to the sloppy and transient sentiment that is often characterized as love; but without its aspects of empathy, the lusting after sex and power throughout his novels renders his characters ignoble, trivial, destructive, tragic, or (most outrageously in *Myra Breckenridge*) ludicrous. That they are all these as well as "stupid" is, apparently, what he has to say about their lustings, those commitments without compassion. But it is when empathy—implied mostly by its absence—is sought more explicitly that the earlier promises of a seriously engaged writer, a "great novelist," seem on the point of being realized, and fail. While Vidal's politics as expressed in both essays and novels is Socialist-humanist, it is accompanied by a bloodlessness, a defensive aloofness, lacking in the empathy of love. The fusion of sexes heralded in *Myra Breckenridge,* the bisexuality and androgyny to which Vidal has long given lip service, may also be taken as a metaphor for that mysterious mixture of lust and love, of assertion and compassion, which Vidal has not yet grasped or portrayed. Self-sufficient as the androgynous state may appear, and impossible as it is to achieve, its pursuit also suggests, at its fullest, an engagement of feeling that Vidal has so far not seemed willing to make. It is this elusiveness that makes his grappling with the two-headed monster, while entertaining, not entirely serious.

In the early novel *Judgment of Paris,* Philip questions Regina about power, glory, life's meaning:

"One wants glory?" he asks.

"Oh, more than anything else! To live grandly, to shape the world!"

He laughs: "It's too rich a diet for me. In any case, I've already given you my opinion of politics."

"Shallow, smart opinions," she retorts; "you don't mean what you said."

"But I did. Besides, I'm a shallow person. That's why I've come to Europe to grow deep."

Vidal stayed in Europe and grew deep, contemplating life, lust and history with the tools provided him by nature, his education at Phillips Exeter, and his wartime army stint. He returned to the United States during the 1950s to explore the expanding power of TV, and wrote numerous scripts the best known of which became stage plays: *Visit to a Small Planet, The Best Man.* In 1960, he ran for Congress from Dutchess County in New York. He was defeated in that Republican stronghold, but not without glory; he got more votes for Congress from that area than John Kennedy in running successfully for the Presidency. (Vidal's Kennedy connections were based on a stepfather once shared with Jackie Kennedy and on friendships severed by personal and political assassinations; but there is a nostalgic note when they are mentioned that leads one to think those were in some ways golden years for Vidal: like Burr's association with Jefferson, a step from the Presidency. And there is a sybaritic snobbishness in Vidal, despite his egalitarian politics, evident in his avowed preference for the company of the rich, the powerful and the corrupt—if these adjectives are not, as he might say, redundant.) Through the 1960s, Vidal's verbal explorations of power (*Julian, Washington, D.C., Myra Breckenridge*) were carried on alongside his actual excursions into politics: campaigning for Eugene McCarthy, with Dr. Spock in the New Party, for George McGovern. In 1972 he translated politics into theatre by putting Nixon on stage in *An Evening with Richard Nixon and . . .* before theatre went into politics to produce the Watergate Follies.

Vidal still oscillates between Italy and New York. In the United States to promote *Burr* in late 1973, he was eager to return to his vineyards in Ravello. The year before he had told an interviewer, "I live more and more in Rome, less and less here. Only politics brings me back—the hope that something good might happen in '72. If not—well, screw it." As it happened, "something good"

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did inadvertently develop out of '72, culminating in '73 and not yet spent: like the "great act of onanism" which Vidal says *Myra Breckenridge* was for him, the Nixon Administration did itself in with Watergate, and with similarly squalid public effects. On his lecture tour of the United States, Vidal repeatedly confessed his addiction to the unfolding Watergate revelations, which might have been written by Vidal himself as a bizarre fiction no one would believe. "If I don't get my Watergate fix every morning," he said to appreciative audiences, "I can't get through the day."

At 20, Vidal told Anaïs Nin he might one day be President of the United States. Recently, at the age of 48 (the age when Aaron Burr killed his mirror-image rival Alexander Hamilton), Vidal told me the same thing. I laughed (with him, I presumed) and said, "No chance." But the way that things have been going, why not? His spiritual father Aaron Burr almost made it, and even lived to a lusty old age. □

Ellison and Something New

RALPH ELLISON: A Collection of Critical Essays. *Edited by John Hersey. Prentice-Hall. 192 pp. $5.95. Paper $1.95.*

YARDBIRD READER: Volume 2. *Edited by Al Young. Yardbird Publishing Cooperative. 224 pp. Paper $3.95.*

JERRY BRYANT

These two collections show the entrenched establishment assessing the small canon of one of its main achievers and a relatively new group of young outsiders striving for a voice and an audience. The prodigious Prentice-Hall series, Twentieth-Century Views, has now initiated Ralph Ellison into its growing fraternity. Not that Ellison needs any help from the commercial and academic opinion makers. In the last ten years, he has been established as one of the most important living writers in America, important in the sense that not only is he an artist of great merit, but he has also been widely read and quoted and constantly near the center of the hottest argument in current American literature—the art-polemic controversy among black writers. By now, Ellison has lost that veneer of newness that fell upon him with the publication of *Invisible Man*. He no longer seems revolutionary to anybody. Indeed, he has come to seem like the main foundation of literary and critical respectability.

And so we have a collection of critical essays on Ralph Ellison, regardless of the fact that he has published just one novel. That is only to be expected, since his status comes from the substance of his literary and sociological statements at least as much as from the quality of *Invisible Man*. What is unexpected is the choice of editor for the collection, the novelist John Hersey, who has never been known for his work on Ellison in particular or contemporary fiction in general. I would have thought someone like Robert Bone or George Kent would have been better suited for the job, since each has devoted a lifetime of scholarship to the work of American blacks and to the American literary tradition. Hersey does include essays by both of them, one of which, Robert Bone's "Ralph Ellison and the Uses of the Imagination," has been anthologized elsewhere and which I think is the best essay by anyone on Ellison.

However, the most interesting part of this collection is Hersey's interview with Ellison that acts as the introduction to the volume—in place of a commentary by the editor. In this, Hersey shows shrewd restraint, for he gets from Ellison more than he could give us in an introductory essay: small details about Ellison's youth, comments about the way his current novel, *And Hickman Comes*, has grown, statements about the craft of fiction, and conclusive opinions on the art-polemic argument. You may begin writing in anger, says Ellison, but if you remain faithful to the moral demands of your craft, you try to give your characters "the density of the human rather than the narrow intensity of the demonic. That means that you try to delineate them as men and women who possess feelings and ideals, no matter how much you reject their feelings and ideals."

There are other interesting pieces in here, too, reviews of *Shadow and Act* by Robert Penn Warren and Stanley Edgar Hyman, a review of *Invisible Man* by Saul Bellow, a long personal essay by the young black writer James Alan McPherson that touches on Ellison's rejection by the young black militants and his tenacious insistence that America is unity in diversity. Most of the pages are given to critical essays devoted to *Invisible Man*, and they range from the black political orientation of Larry Neal, who tries to make Ellison a black nationalist (very persuasively, too), to the manically intellectualized view of Earl Rovit, who tries to explain Ellison's place in the American comic tradition, using an intense academic style characterized by phrases like "a neutralization of momentum" and "processive incantations." There is a sane, straightforward analysis by the British critic Tony Tan-

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"A provocative picture of one man's inner evolution from believer to fervent agnostic and civil libertarian."*

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BY PAUL BLANSHARD

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ner, and an archetypal approach by the scholar William J. Schafer.

But, taken all in all, there is something suffocating about this collection. I do not mean to belittle the achievement of Ralph Ellison or to underrate his importance on the American literary scene. But in a way, he's like professional football. His very visibility tends to numb our interest in reading still more *about* his one and only novel. Valid though his critical and social positions may be and admirable as I believe Ellison's integrity is, the body of his work is too small and too lacking in variety to justify the number of words written about him.

This is why it is a pleasure to turn from Hersey's collection to *Yardbird Reader 2*. It's a paperback. And compared to the Prentice-Hall volume, it is cheaply put together, with a glued binding, a good many typographical errors and errors of usage, and an occasional poorly printed page. But it is a work of love and vitality, an attempt to give exposure to nearly forty writers and artists of varying reputation, almost none of whom has received much attention from America's critical establishment. There are some moderately well-known names here. John A. Williams writes a fascinating article on getting inexpensive relief from a chronic back condition through acupuncture, after fruitlessly going through much money and many authorized M.D.s. Charles Wright, the author of *The Wig*, contributes a disappointingly thin story about a down-home girl, now 25, her life passing her by, who surrenders to an old acquaintance while she is visiting New York. And there is a splendid poem by Michael Harper: "Love Letters: The Caribou Hills, the Moose Range," organized by the point-counterpoint of jazz and baroque music, giving vividly the feeling of the north woods.

But most of the authors are discoveries of the editorial director Al Young, and perhaps of the associate editor Ishmael Reed. They reflect no school or clique, cleave to no one artistic approach or political philosophy. The collection includes, as Young tells us in his introduction, "work by men and women from a variety of backgrounds: Afro-American, Chinese-American, Japanese-American, Colombian, Puerto Rican-American, Filipino-American, Franco-American, Anglo-American, North African, Kenyan, Caribbean."

One of the most interesting pieces is from a group of young Asian-Americans, headed by the dramatist Frank Chin and the poet Lawson Fusao Inada. "Aiieeeee! An Introduction to Asian-American Writing," first appeared in the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*. It takes up an argument that has received little airing in a world listening mostly to blacks, Chicanos, and Indians. The point of the article is that white racism has worked more effectively upon Asian-Americans than upon any other ethnic minority in the country. Asian-Americans have internalized the white stereotype of the stoical Oriental who complacently lives out the life of his ancestors here in America, and internalized it so completely that the characteristics of the stereotype do seem actually to arise from the group itself. The handful of novels written by Asian-Americans, most of them women, nearly all express the white viewpoint. Chin, Inada, et al. contend that the real Asian-American writers want to be associated neither with a historical heritage which is no longer theirs nor with a white culture that holds them in contempt. The new literature coming from Asian-Americans faces their hidden self-contempt as a prelude to a new era in Asian-American history.

Inada's poem reflects this in "So the Young Brother," in which the "young brother" claims he has no problem as an Oriental but is educated by the poet to the racism all around him. That night, the poet finds a horse eating the fence around his property, and even the horse, who does not have enough to eat, holds him in contempt. In a really effective piece of comic surrealism, the horse tells him to stop fooling around "like a goddamn yellow-bellied Jap sucker."

There are no badly written pieces here, as there were in *Yardbird Reader 1*. Nor is there any sensational experimenting or innovation. Except perhaps for Inada or the poet Charlotte Painter, I can recognize no one artist with the promise of becoming another Ralph Ellison. But the combined voices of those gathered here express a sense of community, a belief that art has a place in life, and a conviction that the task of the artist is to do art rather than polemics. They have not yet become respectable or authorized and that is why, against the Ellison collection, they seem so fresh. □

A Snopes of Murder and Pageants

HITLER. *By Joachim C. Fest. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 844 pp. $15.*

RICHARD PLANT

Can any book cope with the phenomenon of Hitler, the un-person who had millions killed without a worry, the raging salesman of third-rate ideas about Germanic superiority, who almost succeeded in making reality fit his bloody and trivial fantasies? And if a writer tries to do justice to this unlikable subject, can he grasp the many disciplines needed: history, sociology, ethnology, psychopathology? Is is possible for one mind to absorb the vast material on racism, anti-Semitism, inflation, depression, on S.A., S.S., Gestapo, on Himmler's poisonous subempire, on Goebbels and his "co-option" tactics, on mass intoxication, operatic magic, French resistance, ghetto burnings, and the radical chic of the right-wing intellectuals who not only caved in but salivated while surrendering? Fest's book is probably the most comprehensive of all the efforts, in both English and German, on Hitler, his court, his Germany, his lost wars. As in his previous work, *The Face of the Third Reich*, Fest is in full command of the basic configurations and he knows how to travel almost all byways that can illuminate the slow rise of the demagogue and the swift tumble of the generalissimo.

He also possesses the useful and hazardous gift of the novelist: he holds a strong grip on a dramatic situation and develops its climaxes and characters with remarkable skill. He offers an opulence of new insights, a keen organization of antithetic elements that through him lose their contrariety; he coolly diagnoses those qualities that made Hitler one of the most successful conquerors. He interrupts the narrative with "Interpolations," because the diffuseness and ambiguity of the events cannot always be managed in sequence—and, besides, he likes to editorialize. He is helped by the translation (Richard and Clara Winston), which is a model of its kind. The Winstons have simplified, one might say "dieted," Fest's prose, which tends to overflow; they have worked footnotes back into the text where the American reader might otherwise have been puzzled by them. They could not tame Fest's Joycean joy in piling on details (the *Führer*'s favorite movie was *Quax, the Dumb-Dumb Pilot*) but they have toned down his occasional theatricality—which he has so adroitly pinpointed as one of Hitler's dominant talents.

As far as I can tell, Fest has succeeded in delineating the histrionic facets

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of Hitler's elusive character more convincingly than most other chroniclers (Heiden, Bullock, Shirer, Maser, Payne, to mention only a few published in English). We know that he worshiped Wagner, that *Rienzi* and *Lohengrin* were lodestars for him (we have a colorfully cosmetic painting of Hitler in Lohengrin's glittering armor). But Fest goes several decisive steps further. The cunning techniques with which Hitler staged the ever growing party meetings, those rituals of sanctification and mass ecstasy with sexual undertones, were learned from Bayreuth. The sets, parades, fanfares, forests of banners, cones of searchlights which kept the listeners and himself in a state of exultation—they were lifted from the "*Gesamtkunstwerk*," though reprocessed for the needs of the main star, the *Führer*, the Supreme Judge. He also borrowed from The Enemy, the Communists, and Mussolini's Fascist *verismo* melodrama.

The amazing success of this intellectual Snopes was based on his talent as an orator. The sullen, idle, eternal adolescent was metamorphosed into an intoxicating rabble-rouser, who lashed his listeners to a frenzy of hate that led to conversions. Someone has said the rallies were like "public lust murders." Fest has managed to convey all this vividly —one can almost understand why even intellectuals, able to recognize the pseudo-scientific babble behind the music, couldn't resist the thrill of being united with "the people" (Gottfried Benn, Martin Heidegger). He also forces us to recognize how the simple folk, the unemployed, the young, the mentally homeless, found themselves resurrected in him. After the defeat of 1918, many Germans needed to explain away their disillusionment and set out in search of objects on which to heap blame and hatred. In Hitler they found their voice, celebrated themselves, and as he talked his way from the beer cellars to the mega-pageants of Nuremberg, he raised himself to sacerdotal heights—and they were electrified to find themselves in him. Sometimes he descended like a god from a circling airplane, while the searchlights bathed him in a celestial light, and his sorcerer's incantations (promising extermination to the Jews, Communists, unbelievers) united his listeners in a feast of shared fury. The other side of the coin, the denial of reality, finally brought Hitler's downfall—and Fest's book never loses its grip on this fatal flaw. After 1941, as the tide began to turn, Hitler's contempt for the real aggravated the setbacks, brought about the defeat more quickly. I agree with Fest on another point: just as Hitler's "lunatic wisdom," his contempt for traditional strategies, had won him half of Europe in a short time, his refusal to face adversities hastened the final collapse. And again, just as he declined to visit the destroyed cities or the soldiers at the front, he began toward the end to move ghost armies on his map while the Allies had invaded Germany and Himmler schemed for surrender.

Contrary to some commentators, Fest insists—and I believe he is right—that during those ten euphoric years when Hitler prepared the takeover, he adopted successfully a new technique: how to crush democratic institutions from within, how to impose totalitarian rule with the aid of the existent state. He played the role of law-and-order man while trying by every illegal means to gain power. This he had learned from the disastrous *Putsch* of 1923. But then his obsessions gained the upper hand, the "putschist" broke through. He misjudged both England and America; Churchill was a "bullshitting drunk," Roosevelt a Jew, Mrs. Roosevelt half-black. Fest soberly evaluates all aspects of the man: the orator, the politician, the tactician, the charismatic adventurer, the murderer. He even succeeds in conveying to us how the *Führer*'s obsession with the Jews went against his practical interests. Fest refutes those historians who believe that the persecution of the Jews was a trick to please the anti-Semitism of the Germans and other Europeans. In 1942, while every soldier, every truck was needed, while the Eastern front was collapsing, Hitler and Himmler started their Final Solution. They spent many hours devising the bureaucracy of the gas ovens, they sidetracked soldiers from crumbling fronts. Fest has, once and for all, laid bare this rigid core of malevolence. The "Last Testament" Hitler dictated in 1945, before the *Götterdämmerung*, proclaimed that "the Jews, that syphilitic sore on mankind's body," were the Devil; the race must be extinguished.

HEDGER

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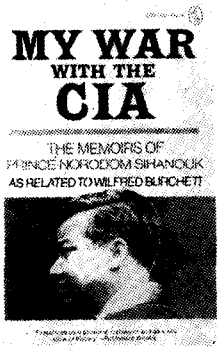

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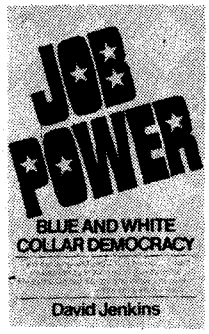

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Fest doesn't quite manage to anchor all his premises in firm ground, and in a work of this monumental scope, that comes as no surprise. True, during the 1930s too many were quickly converted to the swastika, but after 1938 and 1939, a regimen of terror began that made not only direct resistance but quiet withdrawal dangerous. Fest doesn't place the *Kristallnacht* of 1938 in its pivotal place. He also avoids a post-mortem on the ossification of the Socialist Party and the unions which had created it; he goes easy on the journalists of the Left (dubbed "gourmets of catastrophe") who misread the malaise of "Middle Germany," and in their wrath never gave the Weimar Republic a break. Why nothing about Hitler's (conjectural) trip to his relatives in Liverpool? Why so little about the Hess flight to England? Furthermore, I cannot accept his version of the annihilation of Ernst Roehm & Co. which, by the way, contradicts his own searching analysis of the characters involved: Hitler would never storm into the room of that notorious rowdy and disarm him. That, of course, was the Goebbels commercial. Hitler ordered his trusted S.S. bullies to march ahead first, and then he played his part of being disgusted. By the way, Fest makes no account of the persecution of other "deviants," for example, homosexuals and the gypsies, which started around 1935.

These, however, are minor quibbles which a new edition probably could correct. More difficult to change, because embedded in Fest's blueprint, are problems like these: while he lucidly delineates Hitler's implacable hatred of everything Jewish, he fails to work in the Gogolian machineries that produced the camps; he doesn't convey the unique dimensions of the murder factories and what they did to both the victims and the killers. This ties in with Fest's refusal to acknowledge Hitler's necrophilia. (For this, see Erich Fromm's *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* and Elias Canetti's untranslated essay on Speer.) Hitler not only relished burnings, hangings, devastation, but he was forever fantasizing about how many people would be eliminated if this or that happened, and after Stauffenberg's attempt on his life failed and another purge had swept the country, he gleefully watched the films of the executions over and over again. At the end, as Speer admits, Hitler wanted all of Germany totally destroyed. The Germans "were not worthy of their Supreme Judge." Speer defected then, a little late, but his account rings true. That Hitler's sadistic-necrophiliac drives were probably counterbalanced by some odd masochistic tendencies, can only be guessed, and I don't blame Fest for shying away from these questions. In any case, his enormous mural of sorcery, conquest, war and destruction, executed with passionate scholarship, will last. Perhaps to convey what Hitler and his tyranny did to the world we need a new Shakespeare who has been through Solzhenitsyn's hell. □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

It has surely been apparent to readers of *The Nation* that I regard the theatre as my way—or one of my ways—of gaining insight into the state of the world. It must also have become clear that, apart from such revivals as *A Moon for the Misbegotten* and certain foreign pieces, few new American plays this season have significantly served my search. They are *Boom Boom Room, Creeps, My Sister, My Sister* and *Short Eyes.*

I have enjoyed other pleasures: the fun and games of *Candide,* the skillful hoopla of *Over Here,* the acting (among others) of Conchata Ferrell in *The Sea Horse,* the shrewd English zaniness of *Good Evening.* But on the whole I found the season rather dry. Other presentations only obliquely "theatre" have provided me with further occasions for speculation.

One of these, the evening devoted to material from speeches and writings of Clarence Darrow, I have already written about. But on the Broadway boards now are *Words and Music* (John Golden Theatre) and *Will Rogers' U.S.A.,* (Helen Hayes Theatre) both of which I had planned to overlook for purposes of review because they are one-man shows—the first also offers an attractive and effective pop singer, Kelly Garrett—and one-man or -woman shows, unless the solo performer is indisputably remarkable, rarely "grab" me.

Still, *Words and Music* and *Will Rogers' U.S.A.,* apart from the affable entertainment they offer, strike me as worth discussion as Americana. The "words" of the first of these are by Sammy Kahn, who is central to the evening. Kahn has written lyrics a list of whose titles would fill a column. These were composed to tunes by Jule Styne, Jan Van Heusen and many others; among Kahn's many hits, the best known perhaps were *Three Coins in a Fountain, Bei Mir Bist Du Schön,* and *Call Me Irresponsible.* In the course of the evening Kahn sings a number of these songs with no apologies for his voice (Kelly Garrett is on hand for the really tough scores) and tells many jolly stories about the circumstances connected with their writing. As narrator, Kahn is wholly engaging, in the manner of a peppy dinner guest or a table companion at one of Broadway's or Hollywood's expensive but "homey" eateries.

Like many show-biz lyricists and composers, Kahn is an East Side Jew; once very poor and now very rich. His approach to his work is frankly commercial, which does not necessarily diminish its merit. He boasts of his success; there is no offense in this, since making money in our society is, generally speaking, a sign of virtue and a proof of excellence. All through the evening I had the impression that behind the words and music, I heard the satisfied tinkling of a cash register.

There is honesty in the man, the honesty of one whose whole nature and practice is in accord with the environment in which he lives: the world of mass entertainment which runs in a swift flight from Times Square to Sunset Boulevard. There is never a dissonant note of differentiating personality, of eccentric stress or insistence on the specifically individual. There is in him a spirit of friendliness, of conviviality, a nudging intimacy among like-minded men

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and women who are successful or who regard success and prosperity with all their perquisites as the universally agreed-upon American goal.

There is no shadow of doubt here. "Is everybody happy?" The question need hardly be put, since it might suggest that some aren't. This is the popular mainstream. It offers many benefits; it contains certain unmentionable dangers. It is largely reassuring and, though I smiled throughout the evening, I could not quell a slight uneasiness—I almost said queasiness—somewhere within me.

Will Rogers' U.S.A. might be considered the polar opposite of the spirit evident in *Words and Music*. Will Rogers (very agreeably projected by James Whitmore, who gains a good deal from the adaptation of Rogers' spiels made by Paul Shyre, who also directed the actor with modest discretion), Will Rogers, I say, was a semi-literate "critic" of our civilization. Born in the Indian Territory in 1879 (he died in 1935) and himself part Indian, he was wholly American, but at the same time, because of his background, somewhat askew of the main current of our native push and hurrah. A "cowboy," there was something of "Mr. Dooley" and even a little of Mark Twain in him; something, too, of the cracker-barrel philosopher who frequently in our history has added salt and yeast to the dough of widespread complacency.

There is plenty to arouse laughter in the collection of quips and jokes. What is especially valuable in most of them is the parallel they offer to the condition we are in at present. The short-sightedness, skulduggery and downright stupidity of much of our political life, plus the intellectual innocence and plain ignorance characteristic of public attitudes which support social and governmental fraud, were the main targets of Rogers' seemingly off-hand remarks. The audience applauds and in doing so feels itself absolved from any further commitment or action.

It is no doubt salutary for social criticism to be couched in humor. It may lead to further reflection, to study and to judgment, rather than to mere noisy sloganizing and objurgation. But there was another side of Rogers' joshing, something endemically American. We are a nation of good-natured cusses. We are not used to rocking the boat; we are confirmed kidders. Kidding, so we imagine, will blow trouble away; we hope we can laugh sin out of court. For all his acute sense of the national diseases, Rogers as professional entertainer kept assuring us that we are, after all, O.K., a wonderful nation, and that he never met a man he didn't like. This benevolent anarchism is sympathetic, but does it not in the end lead to social and political passivity, to something less than valor? It may even turn in times of sharp distress to a limp or even corrupt pessimism.

Perhaps I exaggerate. To a degree my reaction to the show, at which I had a good time, is due to Whitmore's grinning much more and differently than Rogers himself ever did. There was something insinuating in Rogers' smile. Since he underscored his remarks by casually enacted rope and lariat tricks, which moderated the pace of his delivery (Whitmore only "plays" at these exercises), Rogers took more time to allow his comments to sink in and thus made them more meaningful.

But the deeper reason, I believe, that such popular community critics as Rogers do not have more incisive effect on us is that America has been and still remains a wealthy country. So long as that is the case, our complaints will be muffled in a habitual and seemingly obligatory hilarity. It seems to me there is even more reason for protest now than there was in the 1960s but, to mention only one matter, I do not yet hear the scream that inflation should provoke. □

DANCE

NANCY GOLDNER

Peter Wright's production of *Giselle*, presented by the National Ballet of Canada in early May, is a classic example of directional intrusion. Wright wants to make *Giselle* logical, clear and realistic, but because the 19th-century masterpiece is already logical, clear and realistic enough for the conventions of theatre, his handiwork either tells you what you already know (in which case it is insulting), tells you what you do not want to know, or does not tell you what you need to know. His impulse to remake *Giselle* without changing choreography forces him to dwell on detail and staging effects, concerns that must seem secondary, sometimes even harmful, to first creators hot in the process of thinking up steps and organizing strong, focused structure. First creators cast off bright staging ideas as so much debris. Second creators pick them up as the missing link to the "finished" product, rounding out what the original maker had concentrated on making lean. Thus Hilarion, a suitor to Giselle, and Berthe, Giselle's mother, act out an elaborate conversation and presentation of gift just so the

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audience may understand that Berthe likes Hilarion. It is not enough that Hilarion discovers his rival in love's deceit. We must watch him pace as he figures out that Count Albrecht is in disguise as a peasant, and if that is not clear enough, he also points his finger to the proverbial light bulb when he knows what he will do. He will walk into Albrecht's house to find telltale clues. Apparently unsatisfied with the simplicity of having a person enter a cottage by turning the knob, Wright has Hilarion unhinge the knob with a knife. And since Wright's thinking is picayune, may I note that Albrecht did not lock the door when he went out?

Giselle's entrance, that enchanting jump across the threshold of her cottage, is a famous moment of the original choreography and so is off-limits to Wright. But Berthe and Albrecht get the full treatment—two entrances instead of one. Albrecht runs teasingly betwixt and between trees across the back of the stage before entering in full view onto the stage proper, and Berthe first peers from behind a shuttered window before walking through the door. I was surprised that Wright did not think to have her smell the geraniums on the sill. Giselle's entrance must be as in the original, and so must the action where Albrecht flirtatiously hides behind the house as Giselle bounds out of it and around the stage. But Wright fusses it all by having Albrecht change hiding spots in the middle of Giselle's dance. That detracts from Giselle's solo, but then detraction and distraction are the inevitable fruit of Wright's creativity. One of the most famous scenes in ballet is Giselle's mad scene. In the Wright production Albrecht goes mad too, and at the same time. The direction is minor—Albrecht paces and, with a small pivot away from Giselle, turns to a bystander for support while covering his face with his hands—but the effect is scene-stealing at the crucial moment. More important, it contradicts the focus dictated by the ballet's title. In fairness to Wright, this nasty piece of "realism" could have been Rudolf Nureyev's own idea, since he does not like to stand still, but surely it is Wright's business, or the business of the rehearsal assistant, to squelch outrageously bad manners.

The catalogue of stage business goes on and on, some of it actually useful (as when the visiting prince of Albrecht's family lustfully eyes the local girls) and some of it downright corny (in the Wilis scene, that beloved steam from dry ice and wind whistling from another piece of backstage machinery). All of it is Wright's egotistical game, as is his omission of the one non-dance item that is really necessary. That is an extensive mimed description by Giselle's mother of how girls who die before they are married become the fearsome Wilis. This mimed scene has a lovely flow, is truly scary, and invests the entire first act with suspense, anticipation and dramatic weight; everything is at stake if the Giselle-Albrecht romance does not work out. The only reason I can think of for cutting it is that it is a feature of traditional productions. The best way to produce *Giselle* is to let 'er roll.

> *The Stravinsky Festival of the New York City Ballet*, written and edited by Nancy Goldner, with photographs by Martha Swope and others, is published by the Eakins Press on June 1 ($10.95). In both words and innumerable pictures, it is a detailed, comprehensive and elegant souvenir of one of ballet's historic occasions. —*Editor*

Fokine's *Les Sylphides*, another venerable masterpiece, also must be played straight. The National Ballet of Canada production, by Celia Franca and Erik Bruhn, squeezes the juice out of the original as doggedly as does Wright's *Giselle*, but in a different way. This one is danced by ensemble and soloists (except for Sergiu Stefanschi and Veronica Tennant) as a fragile museum period piece. The particular atmosphere brings to mind a funeral home, where the sylphs tread carefully, not daring even to lift their eyes to the audience lest a wrong move upset the body of Fokine. Accordingly, the tempo is a dirge. The only flight of fancy is George Crum's orchestration of the Chopin piano music. With its harp glissandi and plentiful gongs from the triangle, it is even more vulgar than the usual orchestration. In this *Les Sylphides*, however, vulgarity is almost welcome.

The National Ballet of Canada is not the only company to have killed *Les Sylphides* with overrespect in recent years, which is why the New York City Ballet's no-costume, no-scenery, no-orchestration, no-droop hands and neck production was so important, and right-minded. It's a good ballet, so trust it and dance it—that is what Balanchine and his City Ballet seemed to be saying, and the fact that the statement was made by a choreographer who himself might some day be loved to death added great piquancy to the occasion.

It looks as though the City Ballet will not be giving their *Les Sylphides* any more. For second choice I'd pick the Dance Theatre of Harlem, another company that has recently ended a season in this very busy spring, because masterpieces do not scare them into piousness. We know this from their cheerful performances of Balanchine's *Agon* and *Concerto Barocco*, which already face the same hazards as *Les Sylphides*. For an unaccountable reason, the Dance Theatre of Harlem did not perform these two ballets with as much precision, elegance and degree of personal emphasis as in the past, and in some sections of *Concerto Barocco* they destroyed the choreography with poor technique. Yet their avoidance of the long-face body mask, put on to inform audiences that they are watching Art, is so crucial to our pleasure and revelatory of the dancers' intelligence and integrity that one can almost forgive them their flabby feet and careless legs. I mention the possible *Les Sylphides*-Dance Theatre of Harlem combination not because the company desperately needs better ballets or ones more in line with the dancers' talents, but because there are so few pre-Balanchine masterpieces extant in the international repertory and so few companies who know how to treat them. The Dance Theatre of Harlem has been touted as a (the only!) black classical ballet company, but their wholesome, happy approach to the classics could be their most important contribution to ballet in America. □

MUSIC

RICHARD DYER

Sarah Caldwell is not a woman to make excuses: what she thinks it important to do, she does. She faces the same budgetary problems that plague every other operatic institution in this country; she has a public infinitely responsive to *Madama Butterfly*; Boston, where she works, has no theatre in any way fit for the performance of opera. Yet years ago she gave what remain the only staged performances in the United States of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, the first American presentation of Berg's *Lulu*; she beat the Metropolitan Opera to an uncut *Les Troyens*. And last week in a converted movie house, on a stage not deep enough to house a convincing *Mikado*, she gave the American première of Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, the last and largest labor of a major 20th-century composer, a piece the Met was announcing as far back as the Johnson years, and one that has been seen here only on television, in a heavily cut performance, back in 1957.

Inevitably, *War and Peace* gave Prokof-

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iev a lot of trouble. He worked on it from 1941 until his death in 1953 and it meant a lot to him; he told Kabalevsky that he was prepared to accept the failure of anything else he had written. But there's no putting Tolstoy's *War and Peace* on the stage, not even in the four and a half hours the work takes in performance. Like Tchaikovsky when he'd finished his adaptation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, and for the same reasons, Prokofiev didn't call his *War and Peace* an opera, but "lyrico-dramatic scenes after Tolstoy's novel."

Prokofiev knew what was wanted: "The destinies of the main characters introduced in the first six scenes are closely linked with war events. I was particularly eager to stress the profound changes that occurred in their mental and moral make-up as a result of the dangers threatening their country." But that is not what he and the librettist (his wife, the poet Mira Mendelsohn) did—or even could do; their work can only be deeply unsatisfying to those who have read the book, confusing to those who have not.

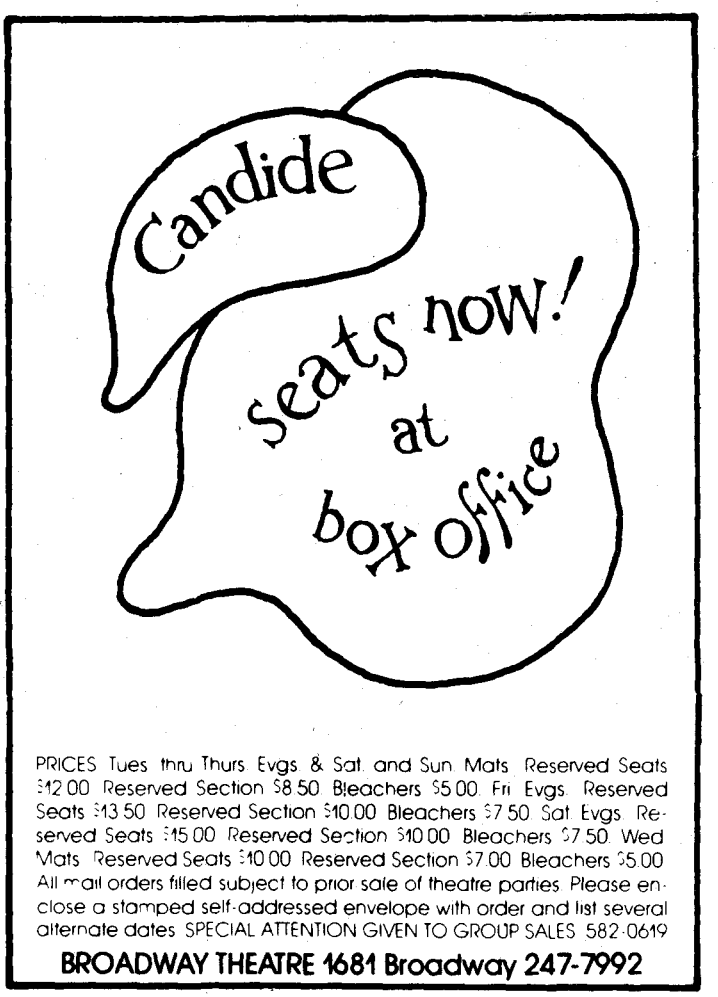
Opera is a medium for direct emotional expression, for strong and simple dramatic confrontation and conflict: it has not often been a medium for real complexity of characterization or for the play and counterplay of ideas and personalities and historical forces. Opera can be complex of course, but it becomes so through its simplifications: the enlargement in opera of strong conflicting emotions and gestures sheds its own complicating illumination on the quotidian way we usually experience those emotions, enact those gestures.

There is really no way for opera to convey the character and destiny of a figure like Pierre; a tenor simply wanders in and out of the activity voicing confusion and humanitarian sentiment while other people occasionally sing about how good he is. Prince Andrei dominates the first two scenes, makes a brief appearance at the battle of Borodino four scenes later, and has a full-scale operatic death scene more than an hour after that. Tolstoy's is a novel of inevitability—we know how Andrei got to that hut at Mytishchy, what made him the person he was there, so altered from, so similar to, the yearning widower who had visited the Rostovs at Otradnoye six years before. Everything in Prokofiev's opera, on the other hand, seems arbitrary; we have little sense of the characters' lives when they are not right there in front of us, and what they do right there in front of us doesn't make much sense because we don't know why they're doing it. (Of course we don't always know why the people in *Il Trovatore* carry on the way they do, but Verdi's melodies tumble in profusion, each of them probing further into emotional truths than do most of Prokofiev's.) In the libretto characters are reduced to cartoons who ricochet through a complex plot much of whose complexity, the point is, depends upon the generating complexity of the persons who make little decisions that have large consequences.

The history of the opera's revisions indicates how aware Prokofiev was of this dilemma. The earlier versions avoid traditional operatic numbers—ariosos, duets and so forth; Prokofiev set his plotty text mostly in a kind of recitative. The result wasn't convincing opera, but something too close to a film sound track. At its best—as in the fever and glitter of the ballroom scenes, the fervor of patriotic exhortation, the ironic swagger of Anatole's music—it was ballet music with its wings clipped by the necessity to move along in order to fit in all of those words.

Later, on the advice of the conductor Samosud, Prokofiev recast some scenes, creating solo opportunities for his singers—and thus to some extent also created characters. The simplest figures convince the most: General Kutuzov becomes the dominating character of the opera, expressing himself in broad and noble cantilena. With Natasha, on the other hand, Prokofiev failed: she becomes a conventional operatic heroine. For her he created a lovely identifying theme which she first breathes to the spring night—one that captures both her quicksilver and her stability. But the nature of Prokofiev's melodic gift—the theme is long-breathed and wide-ranging—prohibits much in the way of rhythmic and harmonic development or of working into counterpoint. This, combined with Prokofiev's characteristic reluctance to let a good thing go, means that the same tune appears virtually every time Natasha shows up or anyone mentions her; it is startling to hear her voice the fear that no one will ask her to dance in the same notes she had used to exclaim that the dew like silver lies gleaming on the grass.

This habit of melodic repetition does, however, work to considerable effect in the greatest scene in the opera, the death of Prince Andrei. An offstage chorus chants the "piti piti piti" which buzzes through the Prince's head like the real fly on his pillow that threatens to topple



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the luminous tower of needles he imagines rising from his face. We hear the glimmering music from the night at Otradnoye, the music of Andrei's despair and Natasha's rapture that reawakens his hope, now undermined by unstable string harmonics and ghostly sweeps across the harp; we hear again the waltz that played when he and Natasha first met—all of these alternating and combining as only music can to suggest simultaneous relationships of meaning and experience and feeling.

Also, when Prince Andrei sings farewell to the country and to golden Moscow that he had loved, the melody is the magnificent wide-spanning one General Kutuzov had sung at the council at Fili after he had called the retreat from the city; Prince Andrei hadn't been there at Fili. But Prokofiev's method is not the tune-plugging opportunism that makes Tosca plunge to her death to a melody she had never heard; it is a part of his political design in the opera. He wrote most of the first version as Hitler moved toward Moscow, and his chief purpose became to draw the obvious parallels, to celebrate the boundlessness and unity of the Russian people and the Russian land, joined together to cast off the invader. Characters repeatedly sing one another's music in this opera, particularly in the later scenes, not because Prokofiev lacked invention but because it is the most direct musical way to show community of sentiment and of destiny.

All questions of Tolstoyan equivalence and betrayal aside, it is on this basic level that the opera makes its most powerful effect. There is nothing equivocal about the tub-thumping, pitchfork-wielding pages of the score, and they are uncomfortably stirring—the patriotic emotion is one we can now see only in more complex ways, as Tolstoy already had; though there was never a better excuse for fervid love of country than in 1942.

A lot of Sarah Caldwell's publicity suggests that she runs a one-woman show, and she does get round to doing just about everything, from cajoling people out of the money she needs, to making informed decisions about the performing edition, to conducting and staging. She gave Boston more of *War and Peace* than any other city has heard so far; the only significant cut was the scene in which Pierre sends Anatole packing, a deletion that is unfortunate, not for musical reasons but because it is the only time Prokofiev lets us see Pierre acting as well as reacting.

Caldwell conducts with more abandon than skill, and in her work one cannot look for an overall view of a score, pointed up by details that illuminate; sometimes one cannot even settle for the more modest virtue of togetherness. But after the shambles she left of familiar *Madama Butterfly* a month ago, the general competence of her work on the podium at *War and Peace* was remarkable. The music, so much of it written to propel a plot, profited from her sure sense of theatrical pace.

Caldwell has a lively sense of spectacle, so the war scenes were particularly effective: I had expected the smoky, noisy, focused confusion of burning Moscow, but she also found a very economical metaphor for the Borodino scenes. On the Raeyevsky Redoubt, Kutuzov's aides spread a map of Borodino on the ground and in their discussion placed flags and a large model of the Kremlin on top of it. Later Napoleon's generals on the Shevardino Redoubt altered the deployment of forces, and Napoleon, looking at the model, sang of "this game of chess." Then, at Fili, after Kutuzov decided on retreat, a peasant cleaning woman gently caressed a gold-domed tower, then interposed the French flag. The subsequent disorder of the actual scenes in the Moscow streets then undermined the chess metaphor.

And Caldwell understood that the piece is more patriotic pageant than drama: the opening choral epigraph which expresses the national determination to protect the motherland was sung not only by the "people of Russia," as the score directs, but also by all of the principal characters; amid the final chorus of jubilation they reappeared one by one just as we had seen them first.

The peace scenes were less satisfactory. The sets by Caldwell's usual designers, Helen Pond and Herbert Senn, did what they could for the limited space of the Orpheum Theatre stage, relying on black Venetian blind-like drops, and aluminum structures that could be rapidly shifted to define new locales and different spaces —pipey stairs, platforms, columns, furniture that outlined rather than filled shapes. But they worked better for the starkness of war than as a representation of Czarist opulence. And within them Caldwell didn't really know what to do.

The ballroom scenes had bustle and you always knew what you were supposed to be looking at, but Caldwell apparently doesn't know that aristocratic behavior is a code within which human behavior can express itself in most of its complexity; she can dramatize only by breaches of decorum. And Caldwell lacks the gift of creating individual characters or defining complicated personal relationships. Good actors always do their thing for her, and bad ones don't look any better here than they do anywhere else. Lenus Carlson, for example, who sings like Nelson Eddy, remained an All-American Prince Andrei, hailing the rebirth of spring with wide-flung arms, absurdly gnarling himself to sing of the scarred oak that told him that spring and happiness are delusion. Arlene Saunders was a horrid Natasha, hard, posturing, already the "strong, handsome, fruitful woman" the years will make of her, her formerly vibrant vocalism now displaying at every climax the vicious withholding coo of provincial German sopranos.

But most of the many small roles were well-taken by Boston's estimable corps of resident singers, and the overall impression of vocal and dramatic competence was considerably higher than that produced by a week of the Metropolitan Opera on tour.

In a class by themselves were the performances of Donald Gramm and John Moulson. Moulson, the Pierre, is an indifferent singer, but he gave us more of the character than Prokofiev did. In the first half Gramm, his features sliding into dissoluteness, sang a smooth Lieutenant Dolokhov. Later he reappeared as General Kutuzov with a new walk, a new, bulbous nose, a new Falstaffian physique, a new rougher voice. In his acting he mingled unconscious humor and dignity —one saw why the professional military ridiculed him and why the people loved him. The singing was magnificent, and after the first climax in the great aria of farewell to Moscow, Gramm doffed his hat before that model of the Kremlin—a conventional movement, but one that ennobled the character and moved those who saw it, because Gramm did it so roughly, abruptly, unsentimentally but emotionally—the way Kutuzov would have. Both Moulson and Gramm performed with the kind of concentration that made you believe that when they walked offstage they were not opera singers making their exit but men who were leading the lives of Pierre and Kutuzov, even when we did not see, and those are lives which to know about helps us unmuddle our own. □

ON THE WAY

The dry ice of the stars
Smokes over my head.

I live in a house where silence
Makes black holes in the air.

The door shuts on a mirror
Reflecting them.

The terror of a doomed animal
Creates a harmful chemical:
My flesh will poison God.

Stephen Stepanchev

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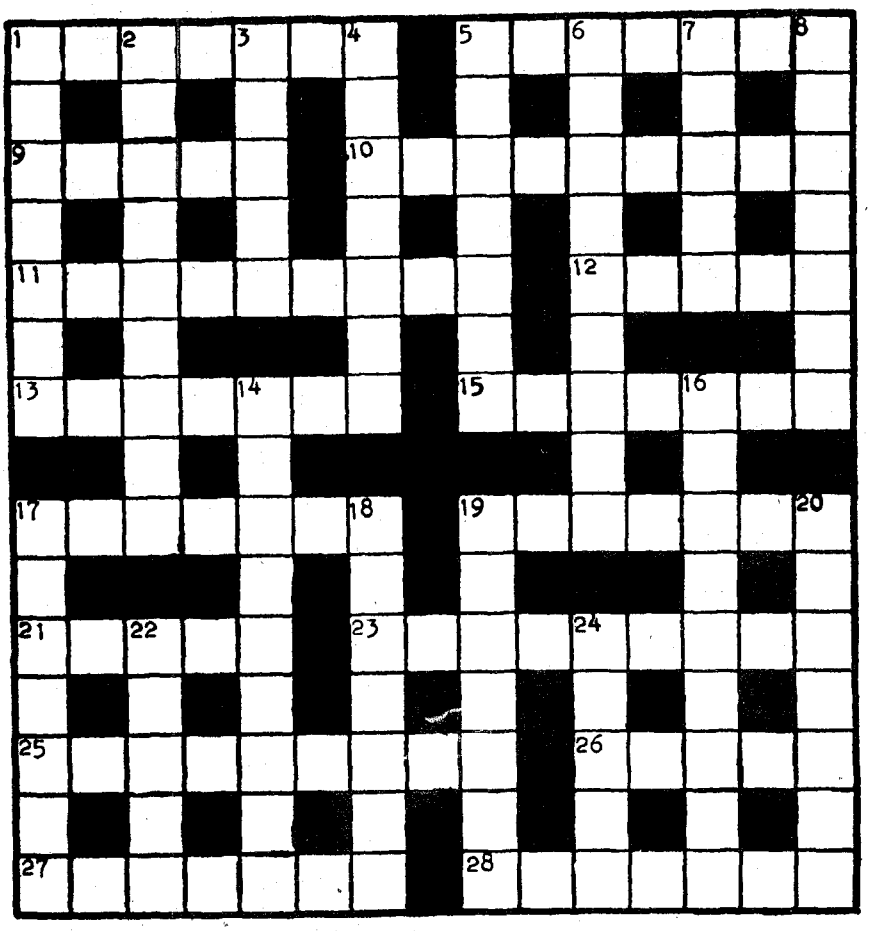
Crossword Puzzle No. 1539

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 I sort of relate around this place, if artistic. (7)
5 and 18 down *Hansel and Gretel* or *The Innocents?* (5,2,3,4)
9 What makes niter so chemically inactive? (5)
10 They come in the last stage. (9)
11 Sets down a singular form of 4, and doesn't leave a thing. (4,5)
12 Stage girl older than 7. (5)
13 There's a point to lots of food, obviously. (7)
15 Starts to go down almost one point. (4,3)
17 Pull out part of the paper from the bottle, perhaps. (7)
19 See 17 down.
21 Ill-conditioned, but sticky. (5)
23 Honestly, appropriate if one does? Certainly not! (9)
25 They go down or up, as the price of their contents might. (9)
26 It upsets Bob I'm a slut. (5)
27 You might cause the film to be shown. (7)
28 Get me an estimate (but not when I marry) being most humble. (7)

DOWN

1 and 2 What a sex-obsessed wine-bibber sees? It might be what tar was supposed to possess. (1,4,2,5,4)
3 Wreckers might take things so. (2,3)
4 Denies what one does after one gets short, possibly. (7)
5 Those who forbid flags to be flown? (7)
6 David's weapon was so primitive. (9)
7 Well-known musical girl? (5)
8 Not, as the Scotsman says, a perfume coming into being. (7)
14 They have intercalery days. (4-5)
16 One of Old France's 5 down. (9)
17 and 19 across. Might be given at last, when not displayed by Uriah Heep. (7,7)
18 See 5 across.
19 Get something off your chest? (7)
20 Act like a private eye, but don't get your this of joint consequence. (4,3)
22 Currently a rather unpopular organization, and a not-very-progressive move. (5)
24 Braze or otherwise put together one that's two-toned. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1538

ACROSS: 8 Without ceremony; 9 Aghast; 10 Let me see; 11 Snub; 13 Ringmaster; 15 Remands; 16 Occlude; 19 Fresh paint; 21 Yank; 22 Stallion; 24 Headed; 26 Preliminary heat. DOWN: 1 Virgin territory; 2 Shea; 3 Buttered; 4 Scalene; 5 Pro tem; 6 Smee; 7 Independence Day; 12 Beads; 14 Sally; 17 Cut short; 18 Signing; 20 Prisms; 23 Lely; 25 Ache.

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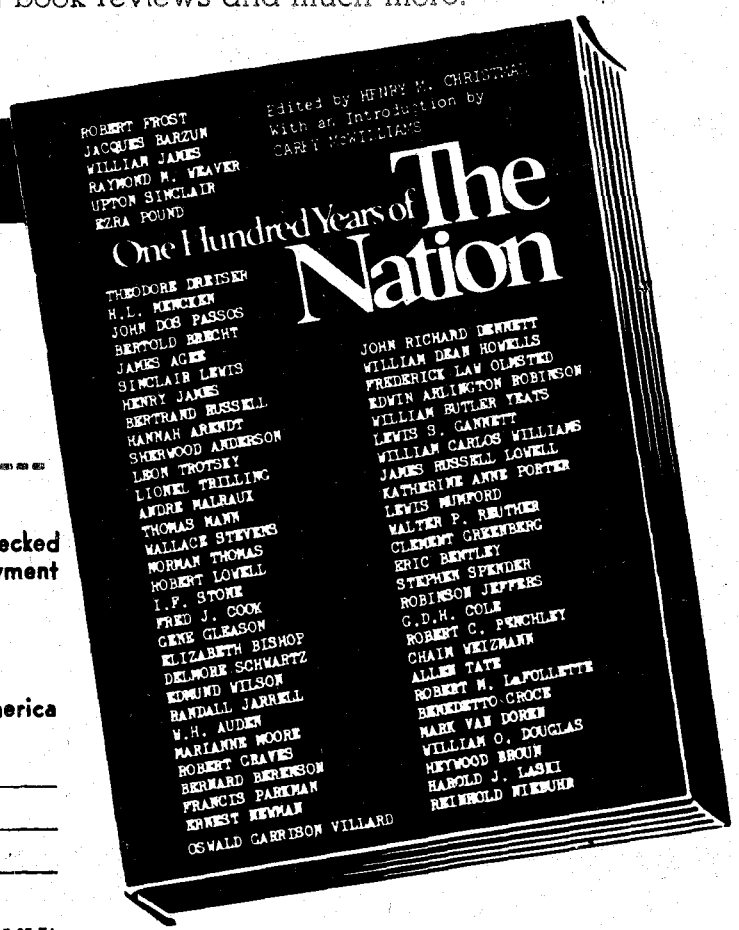

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